

William Daley to be White House chief of staff

President Barack Obama chose former commerce secretary William Daley, seen here in 2000, as his new chief of staff Thursday, bringing a renowned powerbroker with close ties to big business into his retooled administration.

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Aruba TODAY

On Top Of The News E-mail:news@arubatoday.com Website:www.arubatoday.com Tel:582-7800 Friday, January 7, 2011

Arkansas bird deaths blamed on fireworks

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Egypt Christians mark mournful Christmas Eve Mass

By MAGGIE MICHAEL
HAMZA HENDAWI,

Associated Press

CAIRO – Egypt's Christians packed churches Thursday for mournful Christmas Eve Masses, weeping and donning black in place of colorful holiday clothes, under a heavy security cordon by police, fearing another attack like the New Year's suicide bombing of a church that killed 21 people.

At church gates around Cairo, police and church staff checked the IDs of those entering — and their wrists, where many Egyptian Christians bear the tattoo of a cross.

Al-Qaida in Iraq had threatened Christians in Iraq and Egypt in the weeks leading up to the holidays and Saturday's deadly bombing. Militant websites have even posted names and addresses of churches in Egypt to target, raising fears of a follow-up attack on celebrations of the Orthodox Christmas, which Egypt's Coptic Christian minority marks on Friday.

The beefed-up police presence also appeared aimed at addressing Christians' fury over what they say is the government's failure to protect them and its ignoring of anti-Christian sentiment among Egypt's Muslim majority. The bombing sparked days of fierce clashes between Copts and police.

In that vein, state TV gave heavy coverage to the Christmas Eve Mass to promote a sense of unity. As it has in past years, the service at Cairo's Coptic Cathedral, the seat of the Church, was being broadcast live, along with Pope Shenouda III's sermon.

But this year, the ceremony was preceded by a live discussion by a team of prominent TV hosts and newscasters, all dressed in black, standing on the cathedral steps and speaking of the bonds between Muslims and Christians. A tiny logo of an intersecting cross and crescent was set in the corner of the screen. Christmas was declared a national holiday several years ago, in a nod by the government to inclusiveness.

Continued on Page A14

Md. closes 2 government buildings



Police and fire vehicles sit outside of the Maryland Department of Transportation building after a package exploded earlier in the day, Thursday, Jan. 6, 2011, in Hanover, Md. Maryland officials say two employees opening mail at separate state office buildings had their fingers burned when they opened packages that emitted smoke and fire.

*(AP Photo/Rob Carr)
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Arkansas bird deaths blamed on fireworks



NASHVILLE, Tennessee – The deaths of 5,000 red-winged blackbirds in Beebe, Arkansas have been blamed on New Year's Eve fireworks, officials confirmed on Thursday, citing preliminary tests.

"It's looking more and more like that," said Keith Stephens, spokesman for the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. It appears unusually loud noises frightened the birds out of their nighttime roost,

and they may have flown into trees, houses and other objects, the commission said in a statement.

Blackbirds have poor night vision and typically do not fly at night.

Meanwhile, wildlife officials reported other mass blackbird deaths in Louisiana, Tennessee and Kentucky.

While the deaths have sparked multiple theories, bird experts say these types of birds tend to roost at night in huge numbers,

and a disturbance can easily cause some to be disoriented and collide with buildings or trees.

Also, flocks tend to be larger in the American South in the wintertime, because the southern population is augmented by birds from the north, according to Michael Seymour, non-game ornithologist with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

Seymour said these large die-offs are "unfortunate" but "not unusual."

About 450 red-winged blackbirds and starlings were found along a stretch of highway in Pointe Coupee Parish, Louisiana, a few days after the Arkansas deaths.

About 120 blackbirds were found in Wilson County in central Tennessee between Christmas and New Year's Eve, according to the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency.

In Murray County, Kentucky, several hundred grackles,

red-winged blackbirds and starlings were found within several blocks near Murray State University last week. Mark Marraccini, spokesman for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, said no toxins were discovered, and it was not known how the birds died. "They're still looking into it," he said.

The Tennessee birds had been dead too long to determine what killed them, said Lt. Jim Hooper of the TWRA. He said he hadn't seen numbers like this in his 22 years with the agency.

"It was an odd deal," said Hooper.

Melanie Driscoll, director of bird conservation, Gulf of Mexico and Mississippi Flyway, National Audubon Society said that birds like blackbirds and starlings roost in large congregations, of 100,000 or more. Compared to the size of the roost, 500 too 5,000 birds "isn't a big number," Driscoll said.

Tests on the Louisiana birds showed physical trauma, and the birds could have run into nearby power lines, said Seymour.

He said the birds don't get electrocuted, but die from impact, "like running into a wall."

Seymour noted that in the winter, northern birds migrating to the south add to populations there, creating roosts of "literally millions" of birds.

Human causes, such as fireworks, power lines, or a collision with a truck, may explain avian deaths, wildlife experts say.

Stephens said it may be a couple of weeks before the Arkansas commission gets results on what killed up to 100,000 fish in the Arkansas River, about 125 miles away from where the dead birds were found. Stephens said that disease may have caused the fish die-off, since they are all one species, the bottom-feeding drum. □

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Thanks to Aram Belda, a native from Valencia (Spain) and chef at Casa Tua Barcelona.

Patrons also favor the restaurant irresistible thin-crust pizza, baked according to a secret family recipe, topped with Casa Tua infused spicy olive oil, a signature condiment for Casa Tua restaurants on the Island.

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Ex-CIA officer charged with giving reporter secrets

WASHINGTON - A former CIA officer was arrested on Thursday on charges of illegally disclosing national defense information about Iran to a New York Times reporter who wrote a book.

The U.S. Justice Department said Jeffrey Sterling, 43, was charged with six counts of unauthorized disclosure of national defense information and one count of unlawfully keeping national defense information, mail fraud, unauthorized conveyance of government property and obstructing justice.

The arrest marked the latest case brought by the Obama administration charging current or former U.S. officials with leaking classified information to the news media.

It also has been investigating the founder of WikiLeaks, Julian Assange, for leaking hundreds of classified U.S.

diplomatic cables that have embarrassed the White House. Sterling, a lawyer who worked at the CIA from 1993 to 2002, was arrested in St. Louis near where he lives.

From 1998 through mid-2000, he was assigned to a classified clandestine program that conducted intelligence activities about the weapons capabilities of certain countries, the Justice Department said in announcing the indictment against Sterling.

A legal source familiar with the case said one of the countries involved was Iran. In the same time period, Sterling also was an operations officer who handled a human asset associated with that program, according to the indictment.

Beginning in mid-2000, Sterling complained of employment-related racial discrimination at the CIA and

challenging CIA decisions about his efforts to publish his memoirs.

CIA ACTIVITIES

The indictment alleged that Sterling, retaliating for the CIA's refusal to settle on favorable terms his discrimination claims, disclosed information about the program.

It said he discussed the information with the reporter in early 2003 and later in connection with a book published in January 2006.

The Justice Department did not identify the reporter.

But the dates and other details in the indictment make clear it involved New York Times reporter James Risen, whose 2006 book "State of War" revealed details of the CIA's intelligence activities involving Iran.

The source familiar with the case confirmed that the



reporter in the indictment was Risen.

Each charge carries a maximum penalty of 10 or 20 years in prison.

In other cases, Stephen Kim, a foreign policy analyst who worked at the U.S. State Department, was charged in August with leaking a top-

secret intelligence report to a news reporter last year.

Also last year, a former high-ranking official at the National Security Agency was charged with illegally possessing classified information that he allegedly gave to a reporter at the Baltimore Sun newspaper. □

Alabama man gets 15 years for failed toy gun robbery



BIRMINGHAM, Alabama - A court in south Alabama sentenced a 19-year-old to 15 years in jail for attempting to rob an old man using a toy gun, authorities said on Thursday.

Steffon Tolver demanded the man's wallet on a street near Dothan in April, threatening him with a toy gun that was also a belt buckle. Tolver ran away when a neighbor saw what was happening and yelled at him.

Nothing was stolen and

Tolver was quickly picked up by police.

"Alabama law is based on the opinion of the person being robbed, if they were in fear for their life. In this case, the answer was 'yes'," said Banks Smith, Assistant District Attorney for Houston County, who prosecuted the case.

Houston county judge "Butch" Binford on Wednesday reduced the Alabama state law mandatory sentence of 20 years for

robbery with a firearm to the 15 years awarded.

"It was fairer than we would have liked, We consider a violent crime by someone preying on the elderly, 15 years is a gift," said Smith, who declined to give the victim's name. □



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2 packages ignite in Md. gov't buildings; 2 hurt



Firefighters sit outside of the Maryland Department of Transportation building after a package exploded earlier in the day, Thursday, Jan. 6, 2011, in Hanover, Md. Two packages sent to two separate state government buildings 20 miles apart released smoke and the smell of sulfur when they were opened Thursday, officials said.

(AP Photo/Rob Carr)

By BEN NUCKOLS,
Associated Press

HANOVER, Md. — Two packages ignited when they were opened Thursday at state government buildings 20 miles apart, slightly burning the fingers of two employees but not seriously injuring anyone, police said.

Authorities were investigating a third suspicious package at a state office building in Baltimore, but it was not clear if it was related to the other two.

One of the two packages that ignited was addressed to Gov. Martin O'Malley

and the other to the state transportation department. The State Fire Marshal's office did not find any explosive material in either. "When both packages were opened there was a reaction that caused a flash of fire, a brief flash of fire, smoke and a smell," state police spokesman Greg Shipley said. "This is not to be compared with a significant explosion that you think of when you say that word." One was opened around 12:30 p.m. Thursday at the Jeffrey Building, a state office building just blocks from the State House in downtown Annapolis, and

another 15 minutes later at the Maryland Department of Transportation building in Hanover, near Baltimore's airport.

The employee who burned his fingers there was taken to the hospital, as were three other people who were concerned because they were near the package when it was opened.

Shipley said the packages were small, about the size of a book. One had five holiday stamps.

Mailrooms at state offices across Maryland were being quarantined until it could be determined if any other packages had been sent.

The Jeffrey Building houses the state Department of Veterans Affairs, the

Governor's Office of Homeland Security and the Maryland Secretary of State's office, as well as the mail room for the governor's office.

Cate Conroy, acting director of outreach and advocacy for the veterans affairs department, was working there when the first package was opened and said employees calmly left after being told to do so while reports of smoke were investigated.

"It happened quite quietly, actually," Conroy said.

She said employees were allowed back into the building around 3:30 p.m.

The FBI's joint terrorism task force was assisting in the investigation. A

U.S. Homeland Security Department official said the department was aware of the incidents and monitoring them.

New Jersey state police also said they had notified agencies across the Garden State about what had happened, saying it was part of normal protocol when such incidents occur. The New Jersey agencies were advised to be "extra vigilant" in handling mail and packages.

In neighboring Delaware, Detective Britt Davis, a spokesman for the Delaware Capitol Police, said police were operating in a state of raised awareness, but they were not doing much differently.

Pennsylvania town rallies to save Fritz the police dog



PITTSBURGH, — Southwestern Pennsylvania residents are rallying in support of a hometown victim of budget cuts the local police dog.

Officials in Jefferson Hills cut the funding for the canine program that supported Fritz, who rode in a patrol car with a handler and visited schools in campaigns to combat drug abuse.

The canine program cost about \$7,000 a year but the handler earned as much as \$30,000 extra for having the dog, said

Police Chief Jack Maple. The canine program shut down in December. But residents started raising money to revive the canine program after last month's closing, and dozens of Fritz supporters attended a council meeting this week to encourage officials to reinstate the 5-year-old German Shepherd.

More than 700 people have joined a Facebook group called "Save Jefferson Hills K-9 Program."

A local convenience store has sold nearly 600 "Fritz

Bones" pictures of bones that customers can buy and hang on the walls of the store for \$1 apiece.

Proceeds will be given to the dog's handler, who is caring for Fritz whether officials reinstate the program or not, said store owner Carrie Howard.

"We're angry," Howard said. "We're not done with this."

Kim Gawlas, whose husband Chris Gawlas was the dog's handler, disputed the cost of the canine program. She said her husband was paid extra for overtime and other tasks and not for caring for Fritz.

Fritz played an important role in "drugs, search, apprehension" and other police tasks, Gawlas said. "He's a utility dog, he's multifaceted," she said.

But the police seemed unmoved so far.

"The council just did away with the money for the program," Police Chief Jack Maple said Thursday. "It's a done deal."

Council President Chris King did not immediately return a call seeking comment. □

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Obama chooses Daley as chief of staff

By BEN FELLER,
AP White House Correspondent
WASHINGTON

President Barack Obama named veteran political manager William Daley to be his new chief of staff Thursday, selecting a centrist with Wall Street ties to help navigate a newly divided Congress and a looming re-election.

"Few Americans can boast the breadth of experience that Bill brings to this job," Obama told reporters in the East Room as Daley, 62, stood at his side.

"But most of all, I know Bill to be somebody who cares deeply about this country," the president said. The appointment represented the most significant move in a far-reaching and ongoing staff shakeup that included the departure of Obama's press secretary and several key deputies and economic advisers. It came the day after Republicans officially assumed control of the House and increased their numbers in the Senate.

Daley, who served as commerce secretary for President Bill Clinton, offers criteria Obama wants for the new environment in Washington: an outsider's perspective, credibility with the business community, familiarity with the ways of the Cabinet and experience in navigating divided government.

"I'm convinced that he'll help us in our mission of growing our economy and moving America forward," Obama said.

Daley made a pledge to the president: "This team will not let you down — nor the nation."

Daley replaces Pete Rouse, the interim chief of the last three months and a behind-the-scenes Obama adviser who did not want the position permanently and recommended Daley for it. Rouse, who received warm praise from Obama and sustained applause from staffers watching in the East Room, will remain as a counselor to the president, an elevated position from his former job as senior adviser.

Daley was expected to start as chief of staff within the next couple of weeks. His brother, Richard Daley, is the mayor of Chicago, the post that Obama's first chief of staff, Rahm Emanuel, left his job in October to seek. The Daley brothers are sons of Richard J. Daley, who was Chicago's mayor from 1955 to his death in 1976.

Although Chicago is also Obama's hometown, the president has not had a close relationship with his new chief of staff. But Obama alluded to the Daley political legacy, joking that he "has a smidgen of awareness of how our system of government and politics works. You might say it is a genetic trait."

Daley will assume one of the most important and influential jobs in American government as an adviser and gatekeeper to Obama. He will be thrust into the heart of national politics just as Obama adapts to a new reality in Washington, with Republicans working to gut his signature health care law and pushing for major cuts in spending.

Although Daley has not sought elective office



President Barack Obama listens as his new White House Chief of Staff William Daley makes a statement in the East Room of the White House in Washington, Thursday, Jan. 6, 2011.

(AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

himself, he has long been immersed in politics.

He helped Clinton pass the North American Free Trade Agreement before joining his Cabinet. Later, he ran Al Gore's 2000 presidential campaign and the historic recount effort that ended

with Gore conceding the race to George W. Bush.

When Obama launched his presidential campaign, the Daley family put aside its deep connections to Bill and Hillary Rodham Clinton and endorsed the young Illinois senator. Until then,

Obama and the Daleys had largely operated separately in Illinois politics — not helping each other much but not attacking each other, either. After Obama's victory, Daley helped oversee the presidential transition. □

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Lawyer says prison mistreating man tied to Times Square bomber



BOSTON — The lawyer for a Pakistani man accused of providing nearly \$5,000 to the Times Square bomber said on Thursday she was “shocked” to find him held in prison solitary confinement, and the prosecutor agreed isolation was not necessary.

AFTRA Ali, 28, has been locked alone in a cell for 23 hours a day in the jail outside Boston where he has spent most of his days since being arrested in May, said Miriam Conrad, who is representing him. Guards keep his hands shackled to his feet even during meetings with his attorney, she said.

“I’ve never, ever seen this, even with clients charged with murder,” Conrad said in a hearing in Boston federal

court on Ali’s continued detainment. “I was shocked to see the conditions in which he was being held.”

The lead prosecutor, U.S. attorney William Weinreb, said he agreed that Ali should not be held in solitary confinement and had expressed this to the prison authorities, but the treatment had not changed.

A spokesman for the Plymouth County Correctional Facility said its policy is not to comment on where or how an individual inmate is being held, but noted that a variety of factors including the detainee’s behavior and safety concerns are taken into account in deciding his treatment.

“It isn’t the nature of what

you’re accused of that determines where you will be held,” said John Birtwell, the jail spokesman.

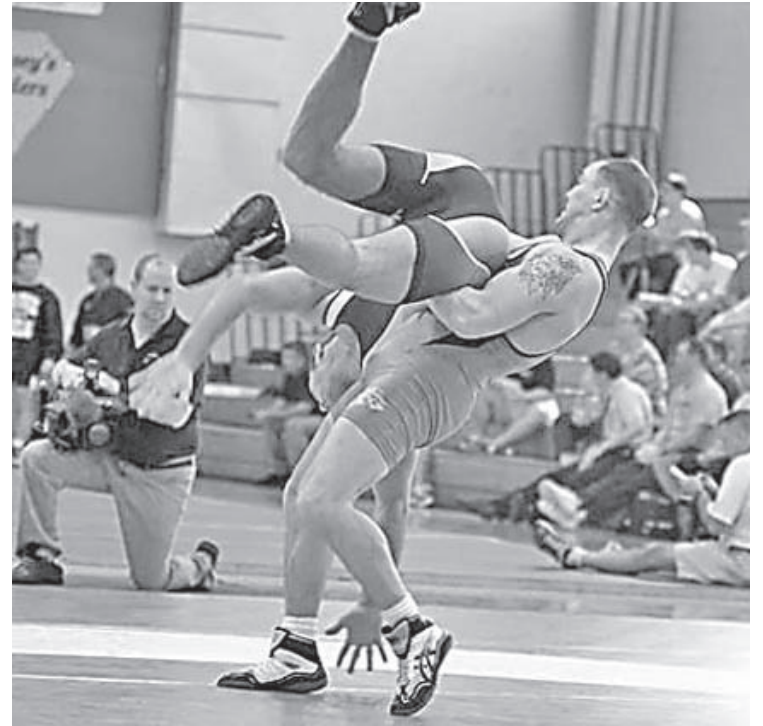
Ali is one of two Pakistani men who the United States says provided money to Faisal Shahzad, who on October 5 was sentenced to life in prison for trying to detonate a car bomb in New York’s busy Times Square. Prosecutors have not charged that either man knew of Shahzad’s plans for the money.

The Justice Department charged Ali with immigration violations and lying to investigators.

He entered the United States in August 2009 on a visa that allowed him entry to marry an American woman, though she had broken off their engagement six months earlier, according to court papers. Ali later married another American woman and then tried to amend his immigration papers, a violation of the terms of his work permit, prosecutors said. In February 2010 he transferred \$4,900 to Shahzad as was arrested during the investigation of that case.

Releasing Ali ahead of trial would amount to inviting him to flee, said prosecutor Weinreb. □

Indiana boy sues pro wrestlers for injuries suffered decade ago



INDIANAPOLIS — Ten years after a seven-year-old boy was injured when two professional wrestlers took their match outside the ring, the boy on Thursday filed suit against the wrestling federation and the two fighters.

Ronald Basham III, now 18, of Clarksville, Indiana, was injured during a match on May 21, 2000 at the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center in Louisville, said attorney Harris Berman. When former wrestler Dwayne Johnson, known as “The Rock” and wrestler Paul Levesque, known as “Triple H” took their fight outside the ring, Basham, then 7, was injured, Berman said.

“(World Wrestling Entertainment) didn’t even pay for the ambulance that took the boy from the arena to the hospital,” Berman said.

The suit alleges WWE didn’t stage the match properly or provide proper security. Both wrestlers are accused of “reckless, willful and wanton conduct.”

The boy’s family contacted WWE “off and on” over the years over Basham’s continued knee and leg pain but the company “never made a reasonable offer,” Berman said.

The attorney said the family has racked up \$37,000 in medical bills stemming from the injury. The latest challenge involved surgery for a dislocated patella that left the teenager with a permanent partial disability.

After years of thinking the boy would grow out of it, Berman said the family filed suit Monday. Because of Basham’s age when the injury happened, Berman said the suit was not covered by the statute of limitations. The suit alleges WWE didn’t stage the match properly or provide proper security. Both wrestlers named are accused of “reckless, willful and wanton conduct.”

A representative of the WWE could not be reached for comment. □

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US, Cuba set new round of immigration talks

MATTHEW LEE,
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Senior U.S. and Cuban officials will meet next week in a new round of immigration talks, the State Department said Thursday, even as the Obama administration continues to press for the release a detained American aid contractor. Spokesman Mark Toner said U.S. and Cuban diplomats will meet in Havana on Jan. 12 to monitor adherence to a 17-year-old agreement under which the United States issues 20,000 visas to Cubans a year. They will discuss “policies and procedures that promote safe, legal and orderly migration,”

he said.

However, in the past, both sides have used the meeting to delve into more contentious issues, including U.S. criticism of Cuba’s human rights record and Cuban complaints about the 48-year U.S. trade embargo.

In making the announcement, Toner repeated U.S. demands for Cuba to release jailed contractor Alan Gross, whom Cuba has accused of spying. Gross has been jailed for more than a year in Havana without charge.

“We urge his immediate release so that he can return to his family,” Toner said. “We’re engaged with Cuba

to promote safe, legal and orderly migration, and to prevent the dangers and loss of life associated with illegal migration but the release of Alan Gross remains an important objective that we’ll continue to advance.”

U.S. officials have made clear that there is little hope for improved relations while Cuba holds Gross. They have also continued to call on Cuban authorities to open up the island’s political system to democratic reform. Cuba insists that the U.S. drop the trade embargo and stop meddling in the island’s internal affairs.

The Havana talks will mark the



A Cuban flag flutters above Revolution Square in Havana. The United States and Cuba will hold new talks on migration issues next week, almost exactly 50 years to the day since the US severed diplomatic ties with the island, a US official said Thursday.

fourth round of immigration talks took place in Washington in June. □

Man pleads guilty to three murders, stuffing bodies in tree



CLEVELAND — A 30-year-old Ohio man pleaded guilty on Thursday to murdering three people, whose dismembered bodies were stuffed in a

hollow tree, according to the Knox County prosecutor’s office.

Matthew Hoffman pleaded guilty to aggravated murder

and other charges in the deaths of Tina Herrmann, her young son Kody Maynard, family friend Stephanie Sprang, and to the rape and kidnapping of Herrmann’s 13-year-old daughter.

The bodies of those murdered were found inside a hollow tree in November, and the girl was found by a SWAT team in the basement of Hoffman’s Mount Vernon home, according to local media reports. The victims’ family had asked Knox County Prosecutor John Thatcher not to seek the death penalty. Mount Vernon is northeast of Columbus. □

Penn. firefighter accused of starting blaze

PITTSBURGH — A volunteer firefighter who helped extinguish a fire at his grandmother’s house in western Pennsylvania has been charged with starting the blaze, authorities said Thursday.

Kenneth Roy Beeman, 18, admitted to police he started the fire in the basement of his grandmother’s duplex in Boswell, Pennsylvania, on Tuesday night because he was “bored,” according to court documents.



Beeman, a member of the Boswell Volunteer Fire Department, was charged with arson, reckless endangerment and other charges and was jailed pending a hearing next week, according to Pennsylvania State Troopers.

A state police fire marshal determined the fire was intentionally set, and Beeman “admitted to having a fascination with setting fires for fun,” according to a criminal complaint filed by State Police Trooper Todd Sherle. Beeman set fire to rags, fanned the flames and woke his grandmother before asking a friend to report the fire, authorities said.

Veteran scam artist sent to prison in New York

NEW YORK — A scam artist with 41 prior convictions was sentenced to prison on Thursday for swindling people by pretending they broke his eyeglasses and demanding they pay for the damages.

Naim Jabbar, 43, was arrested in July after bumping into a victim, blaming the person for breaking his glasses and intimidating the victim into giving him \$100, according to the criminal complaint. A witness called police, the complaint said.

Jabbar was convicted of felony robbery in December and sentenced on Thursday

in state Supreme Court in Manhattan to three-and-a-half to seven years in prison.

Prosecutors said Jabbar had 41 prior convictions, many related to scams, and had used the eyeglasses ploy several times over the last decade.

The prosecutors said they sought the robbery conviction and prison sentence after learning Jabbar had never served more than five months in jail for any of his misdeeds.

“This defendant is a dangerous individual whose highly effective criminal strategy has been



to threaten and intimidate victims into turning over their money,” Manhattan

District Attorney Cyrus Vance said. □



Second National Boa Constrictor sweep: 9 January 2011

The Second National Boa Constrictor sweep is planned for January 9th, 2011. This boa constrictor capturing activity will take place in the Colony from 8:00 to 11:00 A.M. The meeting point is next to the large Valero sign. On January 5th, 2011, a training session will be held at the Centro di Bario Lago Heights from 8:00 to 9:00 P.M.

Volunteers are invited to participate at this second sweep and are requested to register at boa.taskforce@gmail.com. Questions may also be sent to this email address.

The Boa Constrictor Taskforce was instated by the Minister of Integration, Infrastructure and Environment, Mr. Bennie Sevinger, in an effort to keep the numbers of boas in Aruba's nature as low as possible.

The Boa Constrictor is an invasive species and forms a serious threat to Aruba's fauna. A conservative estimation illustrates that more than 17,000 birds were consumed island wide in 2010 by the boa.

The first national sweep was held on December 12th, 2010. More than 120 volunteers participated in this national event. The taskforce is very happy with such a large turnout, but still hopes that the numbers of volunteers at national sweeps will increase. During the boa training session planned on January 5th, instructions will be given about how to identify the different snake species in Aruba's wildlife and how to capture a boa in a very easy way. □

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The next raffle will take place at the end of February 2011 for airfare, and resort accommodations for two, and \$500 in spending money. Who know, it might be you. Winners will be notified,

and raffle results posted on www.shoprenaissancearuba.com.

The fun however has just begun. Your time downtown Oranjestad will be well spent as the Renaissance Mall & Marketplace is Aruba's premier shopping, dining and dining destinations. And don't forget to ask for the mall's discount booklets bursting with special offers and gifts, valued at more than \$150, valid at stores, restaurants, bars, two casinos and a day spa. For your greater convenience, this upscale shopping Mecca is open from 10 am to 8 pm, Monday through Saturday, for non-stop, shop opportunities and leisurely vacation strolling and browsing.

Perfectly located in the heart of downtown Oranjestad, Renaissance Mall houses over 60 stores and offers an assortment of restaurants and entertainment options. The Renaissance Mall carries the latest collections of luxury brands such as Gucci, Carolina Herrera and Louis Vuitton, as well as other high-end lines and one-of-a-kind

boutique fashions. The opening of Starbucks' second location is sure to please shoppers needing a quick pick-me-up, while Aquarius and LG Smith Steak and Chophouse, Gari Wasabi guarantee great dining experiences.

An oasis of relaxation can be found at Okeanos Spa, while patrons looking for more exciting entertainment can try their luck at Crystal Casino or check out what's featuring at Crystal Theater—from movie premieres and boxing, soccer, and football games to live shows, concerts, and fashion shows.

The Renaissance Marketplace flaunts a great number of casual eateries and some of the island's most popular bars including Aruba's first Starbucks Coffee besides the state of the art Renaissance Cinemas, jewelry and souvenirs stores, a travel agency, beach and vacation gear shops and live music most evenings. No matter where or why you travel, there's always something wonderfully new to be found at the Renaissance Mall & Marketplace. □

Big Catch off Aruba



ORANJESTAD - Aruba is an excellent destination for deep sea saltwater fishing, with great opportunities to catch a wide variety of fish off its shores. In

Aruba, there are several charter fishing boats that are available for tourists to choose from in Oranjestad. Charter fishing boats in Aruba head offshore for incredible big game fishing. These charter fishing boats venture into the Caribbean

Sea in pursuit of sailfish, marlin, tuna, king mackerel, dolphin, wahoo, amberjack, and barracuda. In these pictures, an American family enjoyed a day trip aboard the Thaisa when they caught 6 wahoo and a pretty big Bull Shark.

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Double wedding on the Holiday Inn Sun Spree beach



PALM BEACH - On Monday, Stephanie Nicastro, all from Steve Low and Janet Stanton, Gloucester, Massachusetts along with Robert Maltese and joined hands in a memorable,



personalized double wedding ceremony on the Holiday Inn Sun Spree beach officiated by Reverend Diane Keijzer just before sunset, publicly declaring their love and devotion for their significant others. Good friends for a long time, they chose to marry on Aruba mainly for its calm beauty and friendly people, but, also because of them all being from the oldest seaport in America (Gloucester, Mass.), they wanted to wed by the sea, and especially on our beautiful Island. Witnessing the celebration were nineteen friends and family who traveled from Gloucester



and Florida. Photographer Eric Boeldak captured the memories of a lifetime. Steve is the son of John and Judy Low, Janet is the daughter of Ralph and Grace Stanton, Robert is the son of the late Ignazio and Rose Maltese, and Stephanie is the daughter of Sebastian and Grace Nicastro, all of Gloucester. After the unions were sealed with a kiss and the keepsake certificates were signed, all the guests and the newly married couples went to

thewaters edge, and were given a small shell for a special ceremony where everyone made a wish for the couples that all their dreams would come true and their lives would be filled with love, health, laughter, happiness and good will before they threw the shells into the sea. Following the champagne toasts and the cake cutting, everyone went over to Moomba Beach for dinner. Congratulations! □



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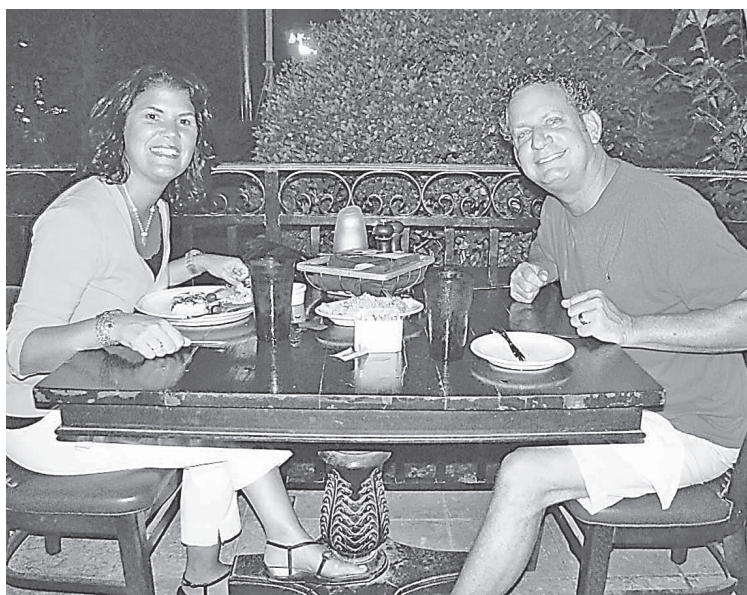
Walk for Donkeys on January 15



ORANJESTAD - The Annual Donkey Walk-a-Thon will be held for the sixth consecutive time this year; it will take place on Saturday, January 15, a week later than usual. The 6-kilometer popular walk is held for runners as well as for people who like to take a leisurely stroll through the Aruban countryside in the company of a few donkeys and lots of enthusiastic inhabitants, visitors, tourists and friends of all ages.

The Walk-a-Thon traditionally starts at five o'clock in the afternoon at the Ayo Rock formation. Participants can register starting at 4 pm; the fee is AWG. 10,-- per person, including a small gift from the Donkey Sanctuary. The entire proceeds of the walk go towards the donkeys, so this is a superb way to support the upkeep of the Aruban donkeys. Photo shows the 2010 Annual Donkey Walk-a-Thon

A fresh catch for Philadelphia honeymooners at Aqua Grill

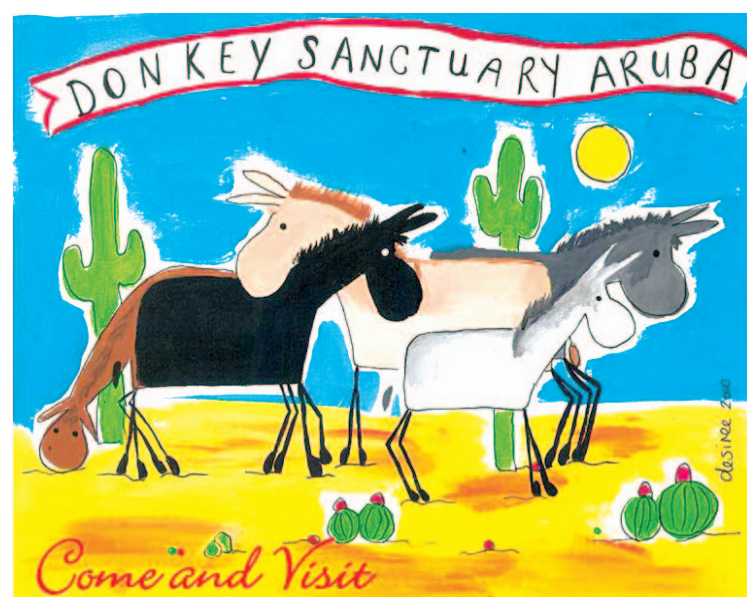


PALM BEACH – Marni and Larry Davis recently spent their honeymoon on the island, and made sure to include Aqua Grill on the dining itinerary. The critically-praised, fresh-

only seafood restaurant in Palm Beach was a must for these seafood lovers, who had a hard time choosing between one of several local fresh fish selections prepared on the restaurant's wood-burning grill, live Maine lobster, and numerous classic seafood dishes.

The couple, who stayed at the Radisson Aruba Resort, enjoyed this first-time visit to Aruba, and like so many other visitors, will surely make Aruba and Aqua Grill a repeat destination!

Marni and Larry are pictured here dining on the al fresco terrace of Aqua Grill.



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Could Congress shut down YouTube with Internet-blacklist bill?

By Gina Tomaine

Boston – A woman in China was sentenced last November to a year in prison for a satirical comment she made on Twitter, a social website the Chinese government had banned.

That same week, despite America's open criticism of government censorship in China and Iran, the United States Senate Judiciary Committee unanimously approved an Internet censorship bill of its own: the Combating Online Infringement and Counterfeits Act (COICA). Sen. Ron Wyden (D) of Oregon effectively blocked the bill from passing the full Senate, but it could re-emerge this year.

An Internet blacklist If it becomes law, COICA would create an Internet blacklist that is not only counterproductive to innovation and progress, but also diminishes a constitutional right to free speech. Under this bill, entire websites would be blacklisted from the Internet if a court deemed copyright infringement "central to the activity of the website."

IN PICTURES: Top 10 countries that say Internet access is a basic right

President Obama claimed in an address to the United Nations in September that the United States would continue to support a "free and open Internet"

Federal Communications Commission Chairman Julius Genachowski also issued a statement following Mr. Obama's speech in which he claimed, "It is essential that we preserve the open Internet and stand firmly behind the right of all people to connect with one another and to exchange ideas freely."

If we don't think China should be able to outlaw Twitter, perhaps we shouldn't start banning websites in our own country. The good intention of protecting online media rights isn't enough to merit hypocrisy.

Already laws in place People should be paid for what they produce, and copyrighted material shouldn't be distributed unlawfully; however, there are already laws in place to protect these rights, such as the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA). The DMCA requires that copyrighted material be removed from infringing websites, but the websites on which they are found can remain active.

Top 5 Google Labs projects

The new COICA bill would take censorship to a new level in the United States. Under this bill, non-infringing material would be removed as well. The domain name of the website would be placed on an Internet blacklist that US internet providers would be required to block. Though the bill is directed at pirating and file-sharing websites, there are countless other websites that could potentially be indicted if a court decides that enough people use them for copyright infringement. □

Where are all the federal judges? Why 90 empty seats threaten American justice

By Carl Tobias

Richmond, Va. – Even as 100 senators in the 112th Congress take their seats today, there will be more than 90 seats still left vacant – an absence that threatens the fair and speedy delivery of justice. These empty seats are the more than 90 vacancies in the 858 appellate and district court judgeships.

The empty positions are victims of the stymied federal lower-court judicial selection process that vexed the 111th Congress. Both parties' inefficiencies and Republican obstinacy blocked lower court nominations for extended periods. Though recent Senate confirmation of numerous lower court judges is cause for praise, many vacancies remain, comprising eleven percent of all federal lower court seats. President Barack Obama must now promptly nominate, and the new Senate must confirm, lower court nominees so that the bench will be at full strength.

What's your 2010 political IQ? Take the quiz.

The unfilled judgeship openings first reached 90 in the summer of 2009 and have essentially remained over that number ever since. The tradition of a stalled judicial nomination process goes back further than that, however. For more than two decades, Republican and Democratic accusations and countercharges, as well as nonstop retaliations, have plagued judicial selection. The process is thwarted principally due to divided government. But divided government provides no excuse. Democrats now control the White House and the Senate, albeit with a reduced majority, but they must keep attempting to work with Republicans to end or ameliorate these counterproductive dynamics.

Process stymied by partisan play Who is to shoulder the blame for a process perverted by partisan gamesmanship? Certain observers criticized Mr. Obama for nominating too slowly during 2009. However, the administration substantially quickened the pace last year, nominating twice as many lower court judges as in 2009. The White House was also thorough

in its consultations, seeking the guidance of Republican and Democratic senators from jurisdictions in which vacancies materialized – all before official nominations. Obama then submitted consensus nominees of even judicial temperament, who are very intelligent, ethical, industrious, and independent, as well as diverse vis-à-vis ethnicity, gender, and ideology. Sen. Patrick Leahy (D) of Vermont, who chairs the Senate Judiciary Committee, promptly conducted hearings and votes, placing nominees on the Executive Calendar.

And there is where most of them languished for months, awaiting votes. Five ways Republicans will change the House

So should we finger Republicans as the chief culprits of judicial selection mired in dead ends? Certainly, Republicans should attempt to be more cooperative. The minority held over virtually all the nominees' votes for one week without convincing reasons in the Judiciary Committee. However, the principal bottleneck has been the Senate floor. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky did not swiftly enter time agreements to schedule floor votes. The Senate unanimous consent procedure allows one anonymous senator to stop floor votes, and this practice has stalled nearly all nominees. Republican insistence that the Senate conduct recorded votes for practically all circuit and many district nominees has also wasted scarce time. When the upper chamber has ultimately voted on nominees, the Senate usually confirmed most by significant majorities – and a number unanimously.

Republican blockades Most troubling has been Republican refusal to hold votes on uncontroversial, well-qualified nominees, inaction which contravenes a venerable Senate tradition. Republicans' obstruction was responsible for Obama having the lowest percentage of confirmed lower court nominees (as of mid-December) of any president over the past 30 years.

In the Year-End Report on

the Federal Judiciary, Chief Justice John Roberts decried each political party's blocking of judicial nominations, saying that "this has created acute difficulties for some judicial districts, [which] have been burdened with extraordinary caseloads." As will be the case for many decisions that the new Congress faces, confirming judicial nominees will require both parties to work together. Mr. Roberts warned that an "urgent need for the political branches to find a long-term solution to this recurring problem" remains.

Vacancies in critical courts The 179 appeals court judgeships – 16 of which are open – are critical, as the 12 regional circuits are the courts of last resort in their regions for 99 percent of the appeals. The crucial Second Circuit has vacancies in 2 of 13 judgeships. To date, Obama has tapped 25 excellent nominees, and he should continue cooperating with Mr. Leahy, Senator Majority Leader Harry Reid – who arranges floor debates and votes, and their Republican analogues to facilitate confirmation. The Senate approved 16 of the nominees, so Obama must now promptly re-nominate the nine prospects who received no floor action and tap nominees for the other seven vacancies. The chamber must then expeditiously confirm the nominees.

The 679 district judgeships – 77 of which are empty – are also vital because district judges conduct federal trials and determine the facts, while appellate courts sustain on average 80 percent of appeals from these judges' decisions. The Central District of Illinois has vacancies in 3 of 4 authorized judgeships. The Northern District of Georgia has openings in 4 of 11 judgeships. In this case, Obama has nominated 78 very capable people. The Senate has confirmed 44, so Obama must rapidly re-nominate the 34 candidates who secured no floor votes and tender nominees for the remaining 45 openings. And then the Senate must promptly approve these nominees. □

Mexican police arrest 2 in Tijuana beheading

By **MARIANA MARTINEZ,**
Associated Press Writers

TIJUANA, Mexico — Two purported drug dealers were arrested Thursday on suspicion of decapitating a man who owed them money and hanging his severed head from a bridge in the border city of Tijuana.

Baja California state prosecutor Fermin Gomez said the suspects, Joel Barriga and Alfredo Avila, were captured with seven assault rifles and acknowledged killing the victim. Rames Mendoza, 30, was reported missing last week. His bullet-ridden head was found dangling from a bridge Monday, fastened with nylon rope and a metal ring.

Also Thursday, two men were found shot to death in the trunk of a car parked outside the General Hospital in Tijuana. Their hands and feet were bound and their bodies bore signs of torture, according to a state police report.

Gunmen later attacked three men driving past a shopping mall, killing one and wounding the other two.

Cartel-style violence largely abated in Tijuana after the January 2010 capture of Teodoro "El Teo" Garcia Simental, one of two reputed crime bosses allegedly caught up in a bloody turf war in the city across from San Diego.

But Tijuana has seen a series of beheadings, bridge hangings

and shootings since President Felipe Calderon visited in October and touted the city as a success story in his four-year-old drug war.

Still, violence remains below levels in 2008, when the turf war reached its peak, and Tijuana is calmer than Mexican cities along the northeastern border.

In the northeastern city of Monterrey, gunmen sprayed a prison Thursday with machine gun fire and hurled at least one grenade that failed to explode. Nobody was injured.

Jorge Domene, a security spokesman for the government of Nuevo Leon state, where Monterrey is located, said the attack was apparently not an



Under pouring rain, a soldier stands guard next to packages containing marijuana during a presentation to the media in Tijuana, Mexico, Monday, Jan. 3, 2011. According to the army, 723 kilograms of marijuana were seized on Sunday during a joint operation with the Tijuana Police.

(AP Photo/Guillermo Arias)

attempt to free inmates from rather designed to intimidate the Topo Chico prison, but authorities. □



Handcuffed and ankles-bound Justino Sanchez Diaz from the Puerto Rican town of Florida is wheeled into court in Arecibo, Puerto Rico, Monday Jan. 3, 2011. Using kerosene and a propane tank, Sanchez allegedly set fire to more than a dozen of his family members and a visiting U.S. woman as they sat down for a New Year's dinner. According to police and hospital reports, three have died including Sanchez's mother and five remain hospitalized.

(AP Photo/Humberto Trias Casaldud)

By **DANICA COTO,**
Associated Press

FLORIDA, Puerto Rico — They ran out of the house one by one, several of them bald and nearly naked, their hair and clothes burned off in a New Year's blaze that police say was set by a relative wielding kerosene and a homemade torch.

"Everyone came out yelling, 'He's crazy! He's crazy!'" neighbor Viviana Bruno, 31, told The Associated Press as she recalled the fire that claimed five lives and critically injured several people.

"It was like a horror movie," she said.

The first person out of the two-story home nestled near the mountains of the central

Puerto Rican town of Florida was Samuel Molina.

He ran across the street to his house, where Bruno and other neighbors laid him down on the cool tile floor, opened a hose and poured water on him. "'Don't let me die,' he kept saying," Bruno said.

Molina was the first to die. Also dead is the suspect's elderly mother, his teenage niece and his nephew, Jesus Sanchez, who recently became engaged and had flown from Seattle with his fiancée, 25-year-old Kate Donahue, so his family could meet her.

Donahue died later on Thursday at the University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Burn Center in Miami, Florida, where she was taken to receive treatment for burns

on more than 80 percent of her body, said Justin Stein, a close family friend.

"She passed very peacefully," Stein said. "We were reminiscing about her life. The doctor said she could hear us talking to her."

Sanchez and Donahue were a fun couple with lots of friends, and they enjoyed dancing and frequented a piano bar in Seattle where he proposed, said Rob McMurray, who shared a condominium apartment with both of them.

He recalled thinking it odd that Sanchez, who owned the condominium, asked him if it was OK if Donahue moved in. "That's the kind of guy he was," McMurray said in a phone interview. "They were wonderful, generous, caring people."

Donahue was known for her collection of 40 high-heeled, black shoes and her love for dancing, especially salsa. She even dislocated her knee dancing to Michael Jackson's "Beat It," best friend Lisa Spoelstra told the AP.

She was born in California, then moved to Washington and later Arizona before returning to her native state to study nursing, following her mother's footsteps, Spoelstra said.

"We were always looking for good, harmless fun," she said of her friend.

Donahue worked at Group Health in Seattle, while Sanchez was an engineer at Boeing.

Officials at the University of Puerto Rico in Mayaguez said Thursday that Sanchez was an outstanding student.

"Jesus at such a young age and as recently as August 2010 obtained a U.S. patent for the development of a system for airplane cargo transportation," said Benjamin Colucci, dean of the School of Engineering. The couple was part of a group of 14 people that suspect Justino Sanchez Diaz, 45, had invited to the house he shared with his parents and sister for an early New Year's dinner, authorities said.

Police said Sanchez Diaz already had doused the walls with gasoline and set canisters with fuel under furniture, including the dining room table. As the group sat down to eat, he came out with a tank of propane gas, doused people with kerosene and set them on fire with a homemade torch, police said.

"It was something nobody expected," local police Lt. Francisco Rosado said. "We haven't even had five murders

in the last decade."

Family members have not speculated on a motive, and police say Sanchez Diaz has kept silent and refused to eat since his arrest.

Florida is a tight-knit town of 15,000 people where businesses have handmade signs advertising fresh hot bread and Christian music wafts through quiet neighborhoods.

Many people know the Sanchez family, described as a warm and gregarious group. They live on a dead-end street in a home that has served many times as the center for neighborhood gatherings, neighbors said.

That tradition ended around the time Sanchez Diaz moved into the house several years ago and his mother's health began deteriorating, said Bruno, who has known the family since she was a child. Sanchez Diaz had been living and working in San Juan when he took over his father's moving business, but he later became unemployed and moved to Florida. He waved occasionally to neighbors but kept to himself, said neighbor Jose Loubriel, 77, who was a cousin of the suspect's dead mother. □

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Egyptian Muslim woman show solidarity logos of Islam and Christianity during a march Wednesday Jan. 5, 2010, at al Azhar university to protest against the terrorist attack on a Coptic Christian church in the northern Egyptian city of Alexandria, killing 21 people and wounding nearly 80 in an attack that raised suspicions of an al-Qaida role. Arabic read 'The Quran and the Bible'.

(AP Photo/Ahmed Ali)

EGYPT MOURNS

Continued from front Page

"Today, I don't say I'm Muslim or I'm Christian," one of hosts pronounced. "I say, I'm

Egyptian."

Muslims attended services at some churches around Cairo as a show of solidarity, getting permission from church

officials ahead of time to get through police limiting access to Christians. "I wanted to do anything," said Hanan Mahfouz, a young woman in a Muslim headscarf holding a candle during a Mass in a church in the Cairo suburb of Maadi. "Coming here seemed like the least I could do."

But healing was hard to come by. Many Christians see the attack as proof of anti-Christian hatreds among Muslims and they day the state does little to address the sentiment despite the professions of unity repeated after any instance of violence.

"Some Muslims are good people," said Raymonda Ramzy, a 45-year-old worshipper dressed in black entering Mass at the main Coptic Church in the Cairo district of Giza. "But even on my way here, a couple of young men shouted at me, 'God take you all and rid us of you.'"

While some Christians worried about attending services for fear of attack, she said, "I never hesitated. I wish I could die in church."

Egypt's Coptic Christian minority makes up 10 percent of Egypt's 80 million people but complains of widespread discrimination they say relegates them to second-class citizen status. There has been growing anti-Christian violence in past years, mostly shootings or clashes between Christians and Muslims in villages.

Saturday's bombing was the deadliest in a decade — and was qualitatively different, the first ever such suicide bombing targeting Christians, raising concern that al-Qaida may have a role, though investigators suspect a homegrown group likely carried it out. The blast hit a crowd of worshippers leaving a midnight Mass at the Saints

Church in the Mediterranean city of Alexandria, killing 21 and wounding nearly 100.

In the southern province of Minya, a worker at a church on Thursday found a small explosive device packed with nails and fireworks planted under the building's stairs, a security official said, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to brief the media. He said the device appeared to have been put there to "test security measures."

At the Saints Church in Alexandria, a double line of riot police stood at each end of the street. A stream of black-clad worshippers flowed in and bells rang as Mass began. Blood splatters remained on some of the walls inside. Police or church staffers asked those entering to show either a cross tattoo or an ID, which denote religion, to prove they were Christian.

Around two dozen Muslims held a solidarity gathering a street away from the Saints Church — kept back by police. They held signs reading "no to terrorism, yes to citizenship" and "long live the cross and the crescent."

Across the country, police were preventing vehicles from parking near churches. The Interior Ministry asked church officials to prevent crowds from gathering in front of churches after Mass — apparently to avoid providing a large target for attack, but perhaps also to avoid a new outbreak of protests. At the Cairo cathedral, security officers with walkie-talkies fanned out across the streets surrounding the cathedral, and metal detectors were set up at the entrances.

Turnout at churches appeared heavy, but at many of the normally festive services, a

somber mood reigned. At the main Giza church, no flowers or red carpet were laid out at the entrance as they usually are for the holiday, and women and children who would normally be decked out in festive holiday colors wore black.

The front pew at a church in the Cairo district of Omraniya was filled with prominent Muslims from the neighborhood. Women in Islamic headscarves sat near Christian women in the headcoverings they don in church. Many women sobbed heavily during the service. Omraniya was the scene of fierce Christian riots in November that left two dead, sparked when police stopped construction work at the church.

"This is the way our Egypt climbs new heights and become prosperous," Father Hanna said in his sermon of the Muslims' presence. "We thank our brethren who came to share with us the joy of our feast, and the pain we feel over."

But many Copts remained deeply bitter and skeptical that the bloody attack would really bring change.

"It's worse than before," said Marina Sammy, a young woman at the Saints Church whose family owns a store in Alexandria. "The events haven't improved attitudes at all. We've been attacked and insulted and our store windows were broken. There's no security at all."

Diana Maher, at the Giza church, acknowledged the attempts to heal the rifts. But she said her own feelings toward Muslims had become stained with resentment and suspicion.

"At work, my Muslim colleagues and I say hello," she said. "But the first day back after the attack, I avoided them." □



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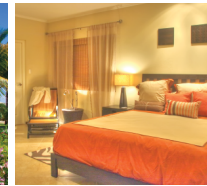


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US: Vietnamese police roughed up American diplomat

By MARGIE MASON
MATTHEW LEE,

Associated Press

HANOI, Vietnam — Police roughed up an American diplomat in Vietnam and repeatedly slammed a car door on his legs when he went to visit a prominent dissident, an official in Washington said Thursday, detailing an encounter that prompted a strong U.S. protest.

Christian Marchant, a political officer at the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi, was expected to make a full recovery after being roughed up while trying to visit the detained dissident, said the U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to disclose details.

Neither the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi nor outgoing Ambassador Michael Michalak would describe the incident, but he said the U.S. had protested what occurred Wednesday in the central city of Hue.

“The United States government, both here in Hanoi and in Washington, has lodged a strong, official protest with the government of Vietnam regarding the treatment of one of our diplomats,” Michalak told reporters Thursday during his

farewell press briefing.

He called the issue a matter of grave concern, saying foreign diplomats are protected under international law.

“All governments are responsible for complying fully with the Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations, including ensuring the safety and security of diplomatic personnel,” he said.

The State Department summoned in the Vietnamese ambassador to Washington to protest the incident, according to State Department spokesman Mark Toner.

Vietnamese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Nguyen Phuong Nga said the government is reviewing the incident, but added that foreign diplomats also have a responsibility to abide by the host country’s laws.

Marchant’s work on human rights was recently recognized with an award from the State Department.

A 2009 U.S. State Department report on Vietnam’s human rights record said political activists and family members were regularly prevented from meeting with foreign diplomatic representatives.

U.S.-funded Radio Free Asia said Marchant was attacked

outside the home of Catholic priest Thadeus Nguyen Van Ly, wrestled to the ground, put into a police car and driven away.

Marchant’s father, Marlow J. Marchant, said in an e-mail that his son had asked him not to comment on the attack.

“I would love to talk about my son but I will respect his request,” Marchant, an engineering professor at Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond, Kentucky, said in an e-mail Thursday to The Associated Press.

The Marchant family lived in Arizona, Arkansas, Texas and Utah before settling in Kentucky, according to Marlo Marchant. Christian Marchant has served the State Department in Beijing and Prague before going to Hanoi, his father said.

Ly, 63, one of Vietnam’s best-known dissidents, was sentenced to eight years in prison in 2007 on charges of trying to undermine Vietnam’s Communist government. He is under house arrest after being released last year on medical parole. During his trial, Ly shocked the court by shouting out in protest. Photos of a police officer covering Ly’s mouth to try to silence him circulated worldwide. Several



FILE - In this March 30, 2007 file photo taken of a close-circuit TV, set up in a separate room of the court, Catholic priest Nguyen Van Ly, lower center, is seen in a courtroom in Vietnam’s central province of Thua Thien Hue. The U.S. government has strongly protested to Vietnam over the treatment of an American diplomat, the ambassador said Thursday Jan. 6, 2011. A media report said the human rights officer was roughed up while trying to meet with the prominent dissident Ly. U.S.-funded Radio Free Asia said Christian Marchant, a political officer at the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi, was attacked by police Wednesday outside the home of the Catholic priest in the central city of Hue.

(AP Photo/ Tran Van Minh, File)

members of the U.S. Congress have repeatedly called for the priest’s release.

The incident comes a week ahead of Vietnam’s National Party Congress, when the country’s new leaders will be announced. Rights groups have criticized crackdowns on dissidents, which have increased during the run-up to the event.

“We think the Vietnamese police are out of control,” Phil Robertson of U.S.-based Human Rights Watch said by telephone from Bangkok. He called on the Vietnamese government to properly investigate the reported incident in Hue and to take swift action in this and other cases of alleged police brutality. □

Ouattara calls for commando op in Ivory Coast

By RUKMINI CALLIMACHI,
Associated Press

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast —

The man recognized as the winner of Ivory Coast's recent presidential election called Thursday for West African special forces to remove Ivory Coast's incumbent president Laurent Gbagbo in a commando operation.

Speaking at a hotel guarded by U.N. peacekeepers, Alassane Ouattara told The Associated Press that Gbagbo's location can be quickly identified by a team of elite troops because he "is essentially at his residence or at the presidential palace."

The regional bloc of West African states, ECOWAS, has threatened military action but in recent days African leaders have shied away from making a commitment, fearing mass casualties and a possible return to civil war.

In the AP interview, Ouattara addressed those concerns, saying that if the West African nations "do send in special forces with the objective of removing Mr. Gbagbo he will be removed, without much damage."

He said elite forces have previously carried out similar operations in Latin America and Africa "to remove the person who is the problem." Ouattara spoke to AP on the lawn of the lagoonside hotel where he and his staff have been living under protection of U.N. peacekeepers since



Alassane Ouattara, in red tie, is watched over by armed guards as he walks with advisors and staff in the garden of the Golf Hotel in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, Thursday, Jan. 6, 2011. Ouattara, the man recognized as the winner of Ivory Coast's recent presidential election, called Thursday for special forces from West African nations to remove Ivory Coast's incumbent president Laurent Gbagbo in a commando operation.

the disputed election.

Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation and the strongest of ECOWAS' 15 members, has a large military and the kind of special forces soldiers Ouattara is calling for. But participation of Nigerian commandos would require the approval of Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan, who as recently as Tuesday said more time is needed to resolve the Ivory Coast standoff.

Some analysts question whether ECOWAS could carry out any military operation in

Ivory Coast without a full-scale invasion and civilian casualties. The African Union's envoy to Ivory Coast said Wednesday that a military ouster should be only a last resort.

At a pro-Gbagbo rally, one of the incumbent's closest associates warned on Wednesday that any attempt to remove the 65-year-old Gbagbo by force will lead to war.

"We need to avoid that the Third World War begins in Ivory Coast ... No army in

(AP Photo/Rebecca Blackwell)

the world can come in and remove our president. It's not in Abidjan that such a thing will happen," said Charles Ble Goude, who heads the Young Patriots, a militia-like organization.

Ouattara maintains that if the Economic Community of West African States carries out a military operation, it would not take much time or many resources and that Gbagbo would cave in immediately.

"I know Mr. Gbagbo," Ouattara said. "If he sees that ECOWAS troops are coming

to capture him, believe me he will start running away. I know him well. He does not have the courage to face those type of situations."

While the United Nations and other world powers recognize Ouattara as the winner of the Nov. 28 runoff election, Gbagbo has refused to step down, insisting he won. Human rights groups accuse his security forces of killing political opponents.

Gbagbo came to power in 2000 and ruled during a civil war that erupted two years later, then overstayed his legal term which expired in 2005, claiming the country was too unstable to organize a poll. The election was rescheduled at least six times before it was finally held.

An ECOWAS spokesman in Nigeria has said the bloc would draw up plans for using military action to oust Gbagbo.

While it supposedly has a standby force to use, it still must call on countries to contribute soldiers and arms for an operation, said David J. Francis, a professor at the University of Bradford in the United Kingdom.

Francis, who has studied ECOWAS' previous interventions, said any such call-up would depend heavily on soldiers from oil-rich Nigeria, but he added: "There is no stomach for military intervention." □

1 hand or 2? S. Sudan to vote on unity, split

By JASON STRAZIUSO

MAGGIE FICK,

Associated Press

JUBA, Sudan — Separation or unity. A solitary hand or two clasped together.

That's the choice — and the ballot image — for close to 4 million registered voters in Southern Sudan beginning Sunday, when a seven-day referendum on separation from Africa's biggest country begins.

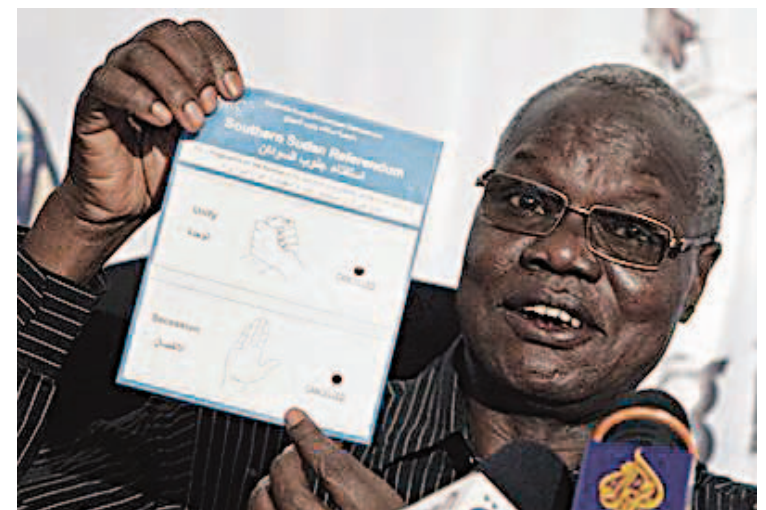
The vote, which is likely to lead to the world's newest nation, is the culmination of a 2005 peace deal that ended a north-south civil war that lasted two decades and killed 2 million people. Organizing the vote in the impoverished land, where many are herders and nomadic at least part of the year and where only 15 percent of people can read and write, was an enormous challenge. Only 2 percent of southerners complete primary school.

Almost 4 million voters were registered over the last several months, including 116,000

southerners who live in Sudan's north and 60,000 in eight other countries, including the U.S.

To be on the safe side, more ballots were printed than the number of registered voters. More than 7.3 million ballots were sent to Southern Sudan for distribution to more than 2,600 polling sites, in places ranging from the slowly up-and-coming southern capital of Juba to remote cattle herder hamlets of a few huts. Anyone who has a parent or ancestor from a southern tribe can vote, as can anyone whose parents or grandparents have been in the south since Jan. 1, 1956.

Southerners will be using a ballot that is much simpler than the long list of names and symbols they were confronted with during national elections in April. This time, the ballot shows two images: one of a lone hand that represents independence and the other image depicting two clasped hands, along with the words "Secession" and "Unity." □



In this picture taken Monday, Jan. 3, 2011, Justice Chan Reec Madut, center, the chairman of the Southern Sudan Referendum Bureau, discusses the referendum ballot during a press conference in Juba, southern Sudan. The Jan. 9 poll will decide whether Sudan's mainly Christian and animist south can split from its mainly Muslim north. Many Sudanese on both sides of the border are worried the vote could lead to renewed violence or even a return to the two-decade-long north-south civil war ended by a 2005 peace deal.

(AP Photo/Pete Muller)

JASON GARRETT NAMED DALLS' HEAD COACH

Dallas Cowboys interim head coach Jason Garrett reacts after a touchdown by tight end Jason Witten in the second half of an NFL football game against the Philadelphia Eagles, Sunday, Jan. 2, 2011, in Philadelphia. Dallas won 14-13.

Associated Press
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SPORTS Aruba TODAY



On Top Of The News E-mail:news@arubatoday.com Website:www.arubatoday.com Tel:582-7800 Friday, January 7, 2011



In this Dec. 3, 2011, file photo, Tiger Woods looks on after teeing off on the fifth hole during the second round of the Chevron World Challenge golf tournament at Sherwood Country Club in Thousand Oaks, Calif.

Associated Press

Tiger Woods Golf Digest end 13-year relationship

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

KAPALUA, Hawaii (AP) — Tiger Woods has one less endorsement deal, ending his 13-year relationship with golf's biggest magazine. Golf Digest announced Thursday the mutual end to a relationship that began at the 1997 Masters. It was the second-longest endorsement for Woods behind Nike. Jerry Tarde, the chairman and editor-in-chief of Golf Digest, said in a statement that they agreed to stop Woods' articles in the monthly magazine, which mainly were instructional tips. Golf Digest has a circulation of 1.65 million. Woods' agent, Mark Steinberg, said the contract ended last year and they could not agree on new terms. Steinberg said with the media going more digital, Golf Digest was asking for more time than Woods was willing to give. □

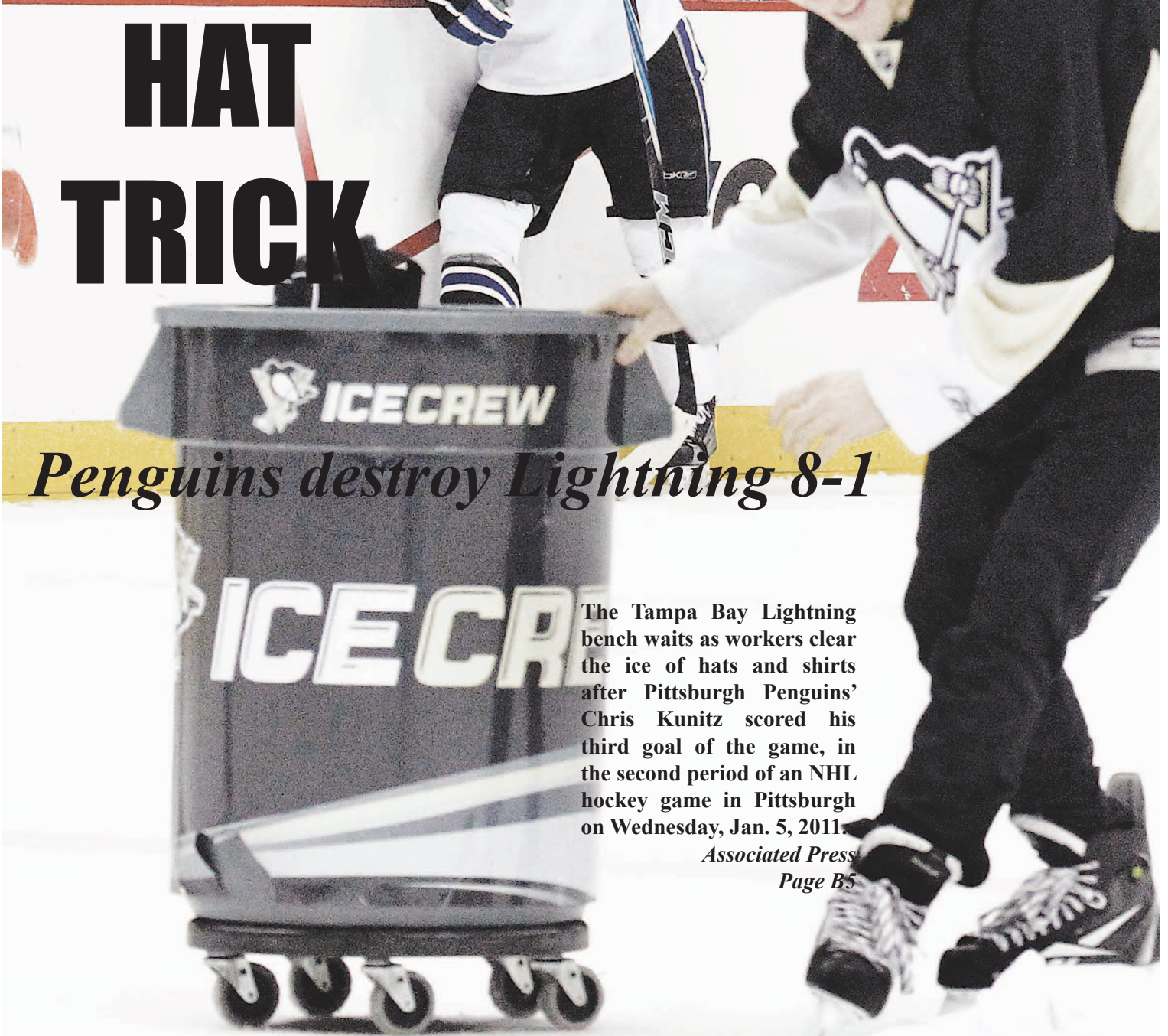


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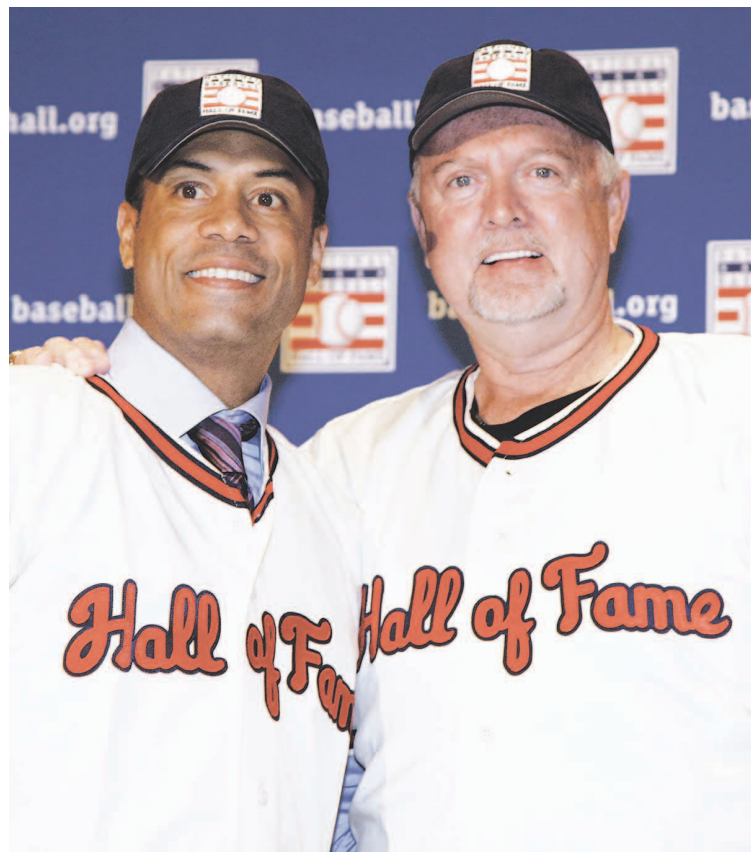
Penguins destroy Lightning 8-1

The Tampa Bay Lightning bench waits as workers clear the ice of hats and shirts after Pittsburgh Penguins' Chris Kunitz scored his third goal of the game, in the second period of an NHL hockey game in Pittsburgh on Wednesday, Jan. 5, 2011.

Associated Press
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Shunning Steroids Era stars OK in opinion of Hall



Roberto Alomar, left, and Bert Blyleven, newly-elected members of The National Baseball Hall of Fame pose for photos during a news conference in New York, Thursday, Jan. 6, 2011.

Associated Press

By RONALD BLUM
AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK — Bert Blyleven and Roberto Alomar got up from their seats on the dais, smiled and slipped on the cream-colored Hall of Fame jerseys they had been waiting to wear for years.

No such honor for Mark McGwire, Rafael Palmeiro, Jeff Bagwell and Juan Gonzalez, a quartet of stars with superior statistics still on the outside looking in, now and perhaps for many years. If it takes decades for sluggers

from the Steroids Era to be evaluated in context with their predecessors, so be it says Hall chairman Jane Forbes Clark. “It will be interesting to see how it unfolds and what the history of baseball does to that question,” Clark said during an interview with The Associated Press on Thursday after Blyleven and Alomar were introduced as the latest electees to Cooperstown. The preliminary judgment of the voting members of the Baseball Writers’ Association of America has been to lock the

Hall’s doors to those accused or suspected of steroids use. McGwire, 10th on the career home run list with 583, got 19.8 percent of the votes on his fifth try on the ballot and well short of the necessary 75 percent. He fell from 23.7 percent last January, a vote held before he admitted using steroids and human growth hormone.

Palmeiro got just 11 percent support in his first appearance on the ballot, even though he is among just four players with 500 homers and 3,000 hits, along with Hank Aaron, Willie Mays and Eddie Murray. But he received a 10-day suspension for a positive test, claiming it was due to a vitamin vial given to him by teammate Miguel Tejada.

Gonzalez, a two-time AL MVP implicated by Jose Canseco in steroids use, received 30 votes, just above the 5 percent threshold for remaining on the ballot next year. Bagwell, never accused of steroids use but a star in the era when power totals surged, got 41.7 percent support in his first appearance despite 449 homers, and NL MVP and Rookie of the Year awards.

“I think the writers are doing a very good job,” Clark said. “They have done a good job for us for 75 years now, and

they continue to. And the history of baseball, the story of baseball, is what it’s going to be.”

Barry Bonds and Roger Clemens, two stars under indictment in steroids-related cases, seem likely to meet similar fates when they appear on the ballot for the first time in 2013. Bonds is baseball’s career home run leader with 762 and the only seven-time MVP; Clemens is the only seven-time Cy Young Award winner.

Clark says she doesn’t make her own evaluations.

“The lovely thing about being chairman of the Hall of Fame is that you don’t need to,” she said. “That’s the writers’ job.” Blyleven and Alomar told stories from their careers and spoke proudly of the chills they felt Wednesday when they found out they had made it, Blyleven on his 14th try and Alomar on his second. Blyleven proudly wore his 1987 World Series ring, earned with the Minnesota Twins.

Blyleven thanked his teammates and suprisingly “the umpires — even though they’re always lying. For me, they wouldn’t call my curveball.”

Alomar, who posed for pictures with his father, Sandy Sr., will enter the Hall in a

Toronto Blue Jays cap after helping the team win its only World Series titles in 1992 and 1993. Blyleven will wear a Twins cap, honoring the team he’s most tied to, and one he broadcasts for these days.

While the Steroids Era stars won’t have plaques in Cooperstown, at least not for a long time, the Hall is filled with accounts of their feats and memorabilia of their accomplishments. Even if they are not included in the 1 percent of major leaguers to gain enshrinement, they are part of Cooperstown for their on-field feats.

Whether they deserve election will be debated on and on.

“I’m not sure the controversy and the discussion is good for baseball,” Clark said. “But in Cooperstown, what we do, as you well know, is preserve the history of the game. We tell the story of the game, and whatever controversy it is, whether it’s the Black Sox scandal, whatever controversy it is, we tell the story. We don’t opine about it. We just do it very factually and let the fans that come to Cooperstown and use our resources on the Internet, etc., let them draw their own opinion from the facts and from the truth. That’s what we did, is just tell the story as well as we can.” □

Sainz, Coma keep overall leads in Dakar



Volkswagen’s driver Carlos Sainz and co-driver Lucas Cruz, both from Spain compete followed by Yamaha’s motorcycle driver Guido Cusumano, from Italy, during the fourth stage of the 2011 Argentina-Chile Dakar Rally between Jujuy, Argentina, and Calama, Chile, Wednesday, Jan. 5, 2011.

Associated Press

IQUIQUE, Chile (AP) — Stephane Peterhansel of France plowed through the Atacama Desert to win the fifth stage in the Dakar Rally and cut more than

three minutes off the lead of defending champion Carlos Sainz on Thursday. Peterhansel took advantage of navigation mistakes in the dunes by his Volkswagen

rivals Sainz and Nasser Al-Attiyah to steer his BMW to a 56th stage win in an illustrious Dakar career.

“We managed to overtake Al-Attiyah and Sainz by taking advantage of a navigation error they made,” Peterhansel said. “After that, it was our turn to make a mistake and get a flat tire. ... Everything is still possible for us.”

Peterhansel has won the rally nine times — but the last of his three victories in a car and six on a motorbike was in 2007. Sainz still led after the 263-mile desert special from Calama to Iquique on the coast, but his overall margin was slashed to 2 minutes, 26 seconds over Peterhansel, who took over second place from Al-Attiyah, a further 7 seconds back. □

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Cowboys pick Jason Garrett as 8th head coach

By JAIME ARON

AP Pro Football Writer

ARLINGTON, Texas — Jason Garrett nailed his audition. He gets to remain coach of the Dallas Cowboys. Owner Jerry Jones took the interim label off Garrett on Thursday and made him — officially — the eighth head coach in the history of this proud franchise. He's the first head coach who also played for the Cowboys, as he was a backup to Troy Aikman in the 1990s. "He's truly one of our own," Jones said during a news conference at Cowboys Stadium. "We know him well for the qualifications he has for this position. I know that he has spent his entire life preparing for this day. And he is well-qualified."

Garrett made the choice easy for Jones by going 5-3 during his half-season in charge. He took over a club that had been 1-7 and was asked to merely make them competitive. He not only compiled a winning record, but his losses were by a total of seven points. Having seen what Garrett could do, Jones didn't even interview him. He considered receivers coach Ray Sherman and Miami assistant head coach Todd Bowles, who could still join the staff as defensive coordinator. "I was fortunate to be on teams here in the '90s that went to the top of the National Football League," Garrett said. "I understand how those



Dallas Cowboys head coach Jason Garrett, center, poses for photos with team owner Jerry Jones, right, and his son Stephen Jones during an NFL football news conference at Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Texas, Thursday, Jan. 6, 2011. Garrett was officially named head coach.

Associated Press

teams played. I like to refer to it as the Cowboy way."

The Cowboys needed new leadership when a season that began with legitimate aspirations of becoming the first team to play in the Super Bowl at their home stadium went rotten. Jones fired Wade Phillips at midseason and turned to Garrett, the 44-year-old assistant head coach and one of the highest-paid assistants in the league.

The deck seemed stacked against him. The team was coming off consecutive blowout losses, playoff hopes were gone and quarterback Tony Romo was out with a season-ending injury. It also

was Garrett's first time as a head coach on any level. And, as offensive coordinator, he was partly to blame for the mess.

But the Princeton grad had spent years preparing for the opportunity and knew exactly what he wanted to do.

He started the workday earlier, added hitting to midweek practices, required players to jog between drills and cracked down on rules, including ones he added. He had huge digital clocks installed around the locker room to avoid any excuses about being late to a meeting. He was constantly upbeat.

The Cowboys responded,

cutting down on turnovers and penalties, and began forcing other teams into mistakes. They won four games with 38-year-old backup quarterback Jon Kitna and another with third-stringer Stephen McGee making his first start.

Jones believes the Cowboys have enough key players in place to bounce back quickly. Despite the lousy record, Dallas had five players make the Pro Bowl, most from any team.

Garrett will have a say in who stays and who goes, including the coaches. The

defense is especially likely to be overhauled after allowing the most points and yards in franchise history. Jones remains committed to a 3-4 alignment.

The NFL labor uncertainty and possibility of a lost season played into Jones' decision. Whenever players return — as scheduled this offseason, or whenever a new collective-bargaining agreement is done — they already will be familiar with Garrett. Starting over could slow the turnaround Jones expects.

Garrett is well aware of the challenges and pressures of this job, one of the most high-profile in pro sports. He's spent 12 years with the organization as a player or coach. His brothers John and Judd also are part of the organization, and his father, Jim, was with the club more than 20 years, working for every head coach in team history except Phillips.

Garrett's coaching background includes working with many top offensive minds, including Norv Turner and Sean Payton. He's also consulted with his first coach with the Cowboys, Jimmy Johnson. Dallas has appeared in a record eight Super Bowls and won five. However, the club is in the midst of its longest drought — 15 years since reaching the big game, and counting. □



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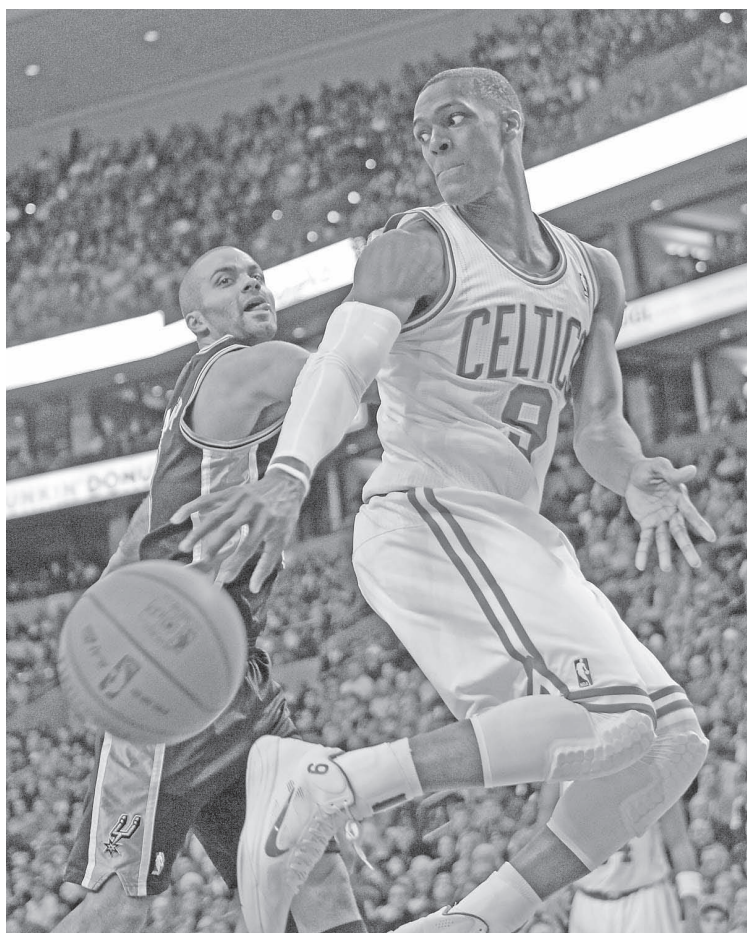
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HOW DO YOU KNOW	daily: 5:45 matinee: 12:15 - 3:00 late show: 11:00	PG-13	TANGLED	daily: 5:00 matinee: 12:15 - 2:45 late show: 11:00	PG
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Matinee: sat - sun | Late show: fri & sat



Boston Celtics' Rajon Rondo (9) passes off in front of San Antonio Spurs' Tony Parker, of France, in the fourth quarter of an NBA basketball game Wednesday, Jan. 5, 2011, in Boston. The Celtics won 105-103.

Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Manu teams.

Ginobili's attempted game-tying shot was blocked and the Boston Celtics hung on for a 105-103 win over the San Antonio Spurs in Wednesday's clash of the NBA's top two teams. Rajon Rondo had 22 assists, 12 points and 10 rebounds for his 11th career triple-double and added six steals. His final rebound came at the death. After a timeout,

NBA Roundup

Celtics hold on to beat Spurs

San Antonio had a chance to tie the game. Ginobili worked down the clock and put up a shot that was blocked by Paul Pierce and Rondo pulled down the rebound.

It's the first time this season that the Spurs (29-6), who still have the best record in the NBA, have lost back-to-back games.

Ray Allen scored 31 for Eastern Conference-leading Boston (27-7), but missed a pair of free throws with 8.1 seconds left that gave the Spurs one last shot.

Ginobili had 24 points and eight rebounds for San Antonio.

Hawks 110, Jazz 87

In Salt Lake City, Joe Johnson scored 28 points, making five of seven 3-pointers, to lift Atlanta to victory over Utah. Jamal Crawford added 26 off the bench for the Hawks, who have won three straight road games.

Deron Williams and Andrei Kirilenko each had 19 points to lead the Jazz, who were without second-leading scorer Paul Millsap because of a

bruised hip.

The Hawks hurt the Jazz with 3-pointers, hitting 14 of 25 on the night, including a halfcourt buzzer-beater from Crawford for a 55-41 halftime lead.

Atlanta led 30-17 after one, with the Jazz shooting just 35.3 percent to 52.4 percent for the Hawks.

In Phoenix, five Los Angeles players reached double figures as the Lakers edged Phoenix.

Kobe Bryant scored 24 points and Andrew Bynum had 14 for L.A.. Ron Artest sank a 3-pointer with 90 seconds left after the Suns had got within a point.

Jared Dudley led Phoenix with 21 points, including three of their 11 3-pointers, but the much bigger Lakers dominated the boards 47-31, including 14-5 on the offensive end.

In Orlando, the hosts held off injury-depleted Milwaukee for a seventh straight victory. Milwaukee was without three of its five top scorers in guard Brandon Jennings, Carlos Delfino and Drew Gooden.

Dwight Howard had 28

points and 13 rebounds as Orlando avenged an 11-point loss at Milwaukee on Dec. 4 in which it played without Howard, Jameer Nelson and J.J. Redick.

The Magic led by as many as 19 before their lead was cut to five with 4:06 remaining. A basket by Howard and 3-pointer by Hedo Turkoglu got the lead back to 10 and helped the Magic secure the win despite shooting just 5 of 22 from beyond the arc.

Corey Maggette led Milwaukee with 21 points.

In Houston, Portland overcame Kevin Martin's season-high 45 points to beat Houston.

In other games: Toronto 120, Cleveland 105; New Jersey 96, Chicago 94; Orlando 97, Milwaukee 87; Philadelphia 109, Washington 97; Boston 105, San Antonio 103; Charlotte 108, Minnesota 105, OT; Golden State 110, New Orleans 103; Portland 103, Houston 100; Atlanta 110, Utah 87; L.A. Clippers 106, Denver 93; L.A. Lakers 99, Phoenix 95 □

Hopkins-Pascal WBC title rematch ordered: report

NEW YORK (AFP) — World Boxing Council officials have ordered a rematch between Canada's Jean Pascal and American Bernard Hopkins, whose bid to become boxing oldest world champion ended in a controversial draw last month.

ESPN reported Thursday that sanctioning body president Jose Sulaiman sent a letter to both camps ordering a rematch of the December 18 bout in Quebec City rather than Pascal's planned title defense against US fighter Chad Dawson.

"The WBC board of governors has voted in favor of ordering the immediate rematch," Sulaiman wrote. "The winner of this fight has the obligation to fight Chad Dawson immediately without any intervening contest."

Nine days before his 46th birthday, Hopkins was given a second chance to become the oldest major world champion in boxing history, a mark that now belongs to US heavyweight legend George Foreman.

Foreman was 10 months past his 45th birthday when he knocked out countryman Michael Moorer in 1994 for the World Boxing Association and International Boxing Federation titles.

Hopkins, who enjoyed an unbeaten 10-year reign as a world middleweight champion in a 22-year career, claimed after the fight that

his rightful victory and place in fight history was stolen by judges.

"This was sure enough robbery. And this one hurts the sport," Hopkins said after the draw. "One reason fighters from the States don't like fighting outside the country is stuff like this. I know I won the fight."

A US judge gave Hopkins a 114-112 victory over Pascal while Canadian and Belgian judges scored the fight a draw by 113-113 and 114-114 respectively, giving Pascal a record of 26-1-1 while Hopkins went to 51-5 with two drawn.

"If this guy has a backbone and wants to walk around with any kind of dignity and self-worth, the only thing he can do is fight me again," Hopkins said after the fight.

"If that was me I know that's the only way I could really live with myself."

Pascal, 28, was only six years old when Hopkins turned professional in 1988.

Hopkins and Pascal promoters have 30 days to reach a deal or a purse bid will be ordered. Dawson was stopped by Pascal but had a rematch clause in his contract that allowed each fighter only one bout before a title rematch. Since Dawson would be looking at a second, he might be stripped of the WBC crown before facing Hopkins, which would remove some of the luster from that rematch. □



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NHL Roundup

Penguins destroy Lightning 8-1

PITTSBURGH (AP) — A Chris Kunitz hat trick heped the Pittsburgh Penguins thrash the Tampa Bay Lightning 8-1 on Wednesday, turning an eagerly anticipated clash of NHL divisional leaders into a mismatch.

Evgeni Malkin got Pittsburgh going with a goal just seven seconds into the game and the Penguins, playing for the first time since the Winter Classic, never looked back.

Alex Goligoski added a goal and set up three others as Pittsburgh scored four times on its first eight shots while opening a 5-0 lead in the first period. Chris Conner, Tyler Kennedy and Mark Letestu also scored for the Penguins.

Stars 4, Blackhawks 2

In Chicago, Mike Ribeiro broke a tie midway through the second period with his second power-play goal and Dallas went on to beat Chicago.

Brenden Morrow also scored with the man advantage for Dallas. The Stars were 3 for 3 on the power play, and Steve Ott added a short-handed, empty-net goal.

Fernando Pisani and Tomas Kopecky scored for Chicago. The Stanley Cup champion Blackhawks dropped to 12-

11-0 at the United Center, where they were 29-8-4 last season.

Canucks 3, Flames 1

In Vancouver, the hosts beat Calgary to extend their winning streak to seven games and break a tie for the top spot in the overall NHL standings. Roberto Luongo made 43 saves, only conceding when Tim Jackman netted with 11 seconds left.

Ryan Kesler, Kevin Bieksa and Daniel Sedin, with the 10,000th goal in the franchise's 40-year history, scored for the streaking Canucks.

Fresh off a road sweep through Dallas, Colorado and San Jose, Vancouver hasn't lost in regulation in a month.

Predators 4, Ducks 1

In Anaheim, Patric Hornqvist scored and Nashville won, both for the third straight game, as the Predators beat Anaheim. Pekka Rinne made 40 saves as the Predators weathered Anaheim's 41-24 shot advantage before Sergei Kostitsyn and Shea Weber scored empty-net goals in the final minute. Jerred Smithson also scored for Nashville. Saku Koivu scored for Anaheim.

Rangers 2, Hurricanes 1, OT In New York, Mats Zuccarello



The Tampa Bay Lightning bench waits as workers clear the ice of hats and shirts after Pittsburgh Penguins' Chris Kunitz scored his third goal of the game, in the second period of an NHL hockey game in Pittsburgh on Wednesday, Jan. 5, 2011.

scored his first NHL goal in timely fashion, netting the overtime winner as New York edged Carolina.

Zuccarello, the 1.68-meter (5-foot-7) forward from Norway, scored in his sixth NHL game. He also assisted on Matt Gilroy's goal that snapped a scoreless tie in the third period.

Henrik Lundqvist made 31 saves for the Rangers. His shutout bid was ruined by Eric Staal with six minutes left in regulation.

Thrashers 3, Panthers 2

In Sunrise, Florida, Rich Peverley scored twice to help Atlanta defeat Florida.

Ondrej Pavelec made 33 saves and Niclas Bergfors also

scored for the Thrashers.

Chris Higgins had a goal and an assist and Stephen Weiss added a goal for Florida.

In other NHL games it was N.Y. Rangers 2, Carolina 1, OT; Pittsburgh 8, Tampa Bay 1; Atlanta 3, Florida 2; Dallas 4, Chicago 2; Vancouver 3, Calgary 1; and Nashville 4, Anaheim 1. □

Associated Press

Russia stuns Canada with 5-3 win in title game



Members of Team Russia pose for a group photo with their gold medal following their 5-3 victory over Team Canada in the IIHF World Junior Championship gold medal final hockey action in Buffalo, N.Y. on Wednesday, Jan. 5, 2011.

Associated Press

By JOHN WAWROW

AP Sports Writer

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Russian captain Vladimir Tarasenko didn't have to wait for

an interpreter to describe his team's final thrilling comeback victory.

"We're champions! We're champions! Waaa-hooo!"

Tarasenko yelled, wiping tears from his eyes and never taking a hand off the gold medal that hung from his neck.

Tarasenko had a goal and assist and Russia scored five goals in the third period to overcome a 3-0 deficit and stun Canada 5-3 in the gold-medal game in the World Junior Hockey Championships on Wednesday night.

It was the third straight game the Russians rallied in the third period, and the improbable win secured their 13th title and first since 2003.

"It was the Russian heart and the Russian character," added Yevgeni Kuznetsov, who had three assists.

"This is the best team in the world right now."

Wow Russia. Woe, Canada.

Artemi Panarin scored twice, including the go-ahead goal with 4:38 left as the Russians scored five times on 10 shots and in a span of 16:11. The outburst silenced the heavily pro-Canadian crowd that packed HSBC Arena and headed for the exits after Nikita Dvurechenski scored with 1:16 left.

"It's our fault," Canadian captain Ryan Ellis said. "We had the game in our hands and we let it slip."

Brayden Schenn had a goal and an assist, and Ellis and Carter Ashton also scored for Canada, which lost the title game for the second straight time after losing to the United States 6-5 in overtime last year.

And there was no consolation

in silver, which gave the Canadians an even split of five silvers and five golds over the past 10 years.

"We didn't come here to get silver. We came to get gold. And it's a brutal feeling," said goalie Mark Visentin, who stopped 22 shots. "Explain it? Well, it was pretty straightforward: We got scored on and I should've made a couple of more saves." Earlier, Chris Kreider scored twice, leading the United States to a 4-2 win over Sweden in the bronze-medal game. After winning gold last year, the Americans won medals in consecutive tournaments for the first time, and also won their first medal in five times hosting the event. □



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Matt Damon Cécile De France

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Sat 1:30 / 4:00 / 6:35 / 9:10 / 11:40
Sun & Hol 1:30 / 4:00 / 6:35 / 9:10

PG-13

Jeff Bridges Matt Damon

TRUE GRIT

Mon - Thurs 4:25 / 6:50 / 9:15
Fri 4:25 / 6:50 / 9:15 / 11:40
Sat 2:00 / 4:25 / 6:50 / 9:15 / 11:40
Sun & Hol 2:00 / 4:25 / 6:50 / 9:15

PG-13

Mandy Moore Zachary Levi

Disney Tangled

3D WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

Mon - Thurs 4:15 / 6:30 / 8:45
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Sat 2:00 / 4:15 / 6:30 / 8:45 / 10:40
Sun & Hol 2:00 / 4:15 / 6:30 / 8:45

REGULAR VERSION WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

Mon - Thurs 5:40 / 7:45 / 9:50
Fri 5:40 / 7:45 / 9:50 / 11:55
Sat 1:30 / 3:35 / 5:40 / 7:45 / 9:50 / 11:55
Sun & Hol 1:30 / 3:35 / 5:40 / 7:45 / 9:50

SPANISH VERSION

Mon - Fri 4:45
Sat - Sun & Hol 2:30 / 4:45

PG

Jack Black Emily Blunt

GULLIVER'S TRAVELS 3D

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

Mon - Thurs 5:15 / 7:10 / 9:05
Fri 5:15 / 7:10 / 9:05 / 11:00
Sat 1:30 / 3:20 / 5:15 / 7:10 / 9:05 / 11:00
Sun & Hol 1:30 / 3:20 / 5:15 / 7:10 / 9:05

PG

Ben Barnes Skandar Keynes

THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA

THE VOYAGE OF THE DAWN TREADER
REGULAR VERSION WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

Mon - Fri 4:35 / 7:00
Sat - Sun & Hol 2:10 / 4:35 / 7:00

PG

Ben Stiller Robert De Niro

Little Fockers

Mon - Thurs 5:30 / 7:35 / 9:40
Fri 5:30 / 7:35 / 9:40 / 11:50
Sat 1:30 / 3:30 / 5:30 / 7:35 / 9:40 / 11:50
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PG-13

Johnny Depp Angelina Jolie

THE TOURIST

Mon - Thurs 7:00 / 9:20
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PG-13

STARTING NEXT WEEK JANUARY 13 - THE GREEN HORNET

SPORT BRIEFS

Darvish becomes highest-paid player in Japan

SAPPORO, Japan (AP) — Pitcher Yu Darvish has signed a new contract that makes him the highest-paid player in Japanese professional baseball.

The 24-year-old Darvish was given a \$2 million raise Thursday that will bring his annual salary with the Nippon Ham Fighters to \$6 million.

Darvish was 12-8 with a 1.78 ERA and 222 strikeouts last season for the Fighters. The were reports he was planning a move to the U.S. major leagues but he decided to remain in Japan.



Nippon Ham Fighters pitcher Yu Darvish smiles a big smile at a press conference in Sapporo, northern Japan, on Thursday Jan. 6, 2011 after a new contract signing that makes him the highest-paid player in Japanese professional baseball.

Associated Press

Klitschko to fight Chisora in Mannheim

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP) — Wladimir Klitschko's rescheduled defense of his WBO and IBF heavyweight titles against unbeaten British challenger Dereck Chisora will be held in Mannheim on April 30.

Klitschko was forced to pull out of the Dec. 11 bout due to an abdominal injury. The original fight also had been set for Mannheim. Klitschko's management confirmed the venue on Thursday.

Chisora is 14-0, while Klitschko has a 55-3 record with 49 knockouts. WBA heavyweight champion David Haye wants to fight him and his brother Vitali, the WBC titleholder, in a bid to unify the heavyweight division.



Luxembourg's Andy Schleck, right, his brother Frank Schleck, second right, Switzerland's Fabian Cancellara, second left, and Germany's Fabian Wegmann, pose for a group photo, during the presentation of the new Leopard Trek cycling team from Luxembourg, at the d'Coque National Sports center in Luxembourg, Thursday, Jan. 6, 2011.

Associated Press

Schleck's new team to be called Leopard-Trek

LUXEMBOURG (AP) — The top-ranked new cycling squad featuring Andy Schleck and Fabian Cancellara will be called Team Leopard-Trek. The name was announced on Thursday at a team launch event in Luxembourg. Leopard is team manager Brian Nygaard's holding company. Trek is a U.S.-based bike manufacturer and longtime sponsor of Lance Armstrong and his team RadioShack. Leopard-Trek's squad was automatically ranked No. 1 by the International Cycling Union, helped by Schleck's runner-up finish in the Tour de France last season and time trial world champion Cancellara's wins in one-day classics.

Returning from injury, Venus loses to Zvonareva

MIN LEE

Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP)

— Venus Williams lost to second-ranked Vera Zvonareva 6-4, 6-2 on Thursday at the Hong Kong Classic exhibition tournament in her first match since the U.S. Open. Williams was sidelined with a left knee injury for the last part of the 2010 season and is using the tournament as her only warmup for the Australian Open, which starts on Jan. 17.

The two players traded breaks in the second and third games of the first set before the Russian broke to love in the fourth. Zvonareva broke again in the first game of the second set and extended her lead to 5-2 with another break. She closed out the match when Williams' forehand return landed wide.

The American, a seven-time Grand Slam champion, said

she wasn't surprised by her rustiness and that she expects her form to improve with more play. In Hong Kong, she will play another singles match and is playing mixed doubles with retired men's great John McEnroe. "I haven't played that many matches in the last six months, so I think it showed a little bit today, but it's not too unexpected," Williams said. "I just need to get out there and play points. I don't feel any pressure right now to play my best tennis. I know my best tennis will come with each and every match."

With both Williams and younger sister Serena reaching veteran age — Venus is now 30 and her sibling is 29 — injuries are most frequent and persistent. Serena also saw her 2010 season cut short, although by a noncompetitive injury. She hurt her right foot at a restaurant and that put her

out of action after she won at Wimbledon in July for her 13th Grand Slam title. She is still recovering will miss the Australian Open. Still, retirement doesn't appear to be on the agenda for Venus.

"No," Venus said when asked about calling it quits. "None of those thoughts at all, really."

For Zvonareva, who has a 1-7 record against the older Williams sister on the WTA tour, it was a rare win as the Russian tries to build on a successful 2010 season, when she reached two consecutive major finals at Wimbledon and the U.S. Open.

"I think overall I'm a much more experienced player right now. I can play different matches and different situations much better than before," the 26-year-old Russian said. "Definitely that experience that I was able to get last



Vera Zvonareva of Russia reacts during the second day match against Venus Williams of the U.S. at the Hong Kong Tennis Classic in Hong Kong Thursday, Jan. 6, 2011. Zvonareva won 6-4, 6-2.

Associated Press

year — it will help me in the future matches. I'm just looking forward to the new season."

Zvonareva, a three-time Grand Slam doubles champion, added she may scale back her doubles schedule this year so she can concentrate on singles. Conditions were chilly at Victoria Park Center

Court on Thursday, with temperatures dropping to 13 degrees Celsius (55.4 Fahrenheit). Both players wore long-sleeved tops and donned pants beneath their skirts.

Earlier Thursday, American teenager Melanie Oudin was up a set and a break but lost to Maria Kirilenko 3-6, 7-6 (2), 6-0. □



World number one tennis player Rafael Nadal of Spain serves the ball to Ernests Gulbis of Latvia during the Qatar ATP Open Tennis tournament in Doha, Qatar, Thursday, Jan. 6, 2011.

Associated Press

DOHA, Qatar (AP) — Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer remain on course to meet in the Qatar Open final after both won their quarterfinals in straight sets on Thursday. Federer, a two-time champion in Doha, routed sixth-seeded Viktor Troicki 6-2, 6-2 in just 65 minutes and will face third-seeded Jo-Wilfried Tsonga in the semifinals.

Top-ranked Nadal was given more of a test by Latvia's Ernests Gulbis before he

came through 7-6 (3), 6-3.

"It is always a difficult match against him," Nadal said. "You have to play special against him. I did my best today and I am happy about it. "I pushed him hard and broke him many times. I am playing well. My target here is to win (the title)."

Nadal plays defending champion Nikolay Davydenko of Russia or Ivo Karlovic of Croatia on Friday.

The Spaniard broke Gulbis

Nadal and Federer on course for Qatar Open final

in the fourth game of the first set and though Gulbis broke back, the 22-year-old Latvian could not maintain his form in the tiebreaker and Nadal won four points in a row to take it. On Wednesday, Nadal dropped the second set 6-0 against Lukas Lacko after taking the first on a tiebreaker, but there was no repeat against Gulbis and he broke twice more to win inside two hours. Federer, who won the title in 2005 and 2006, had little trouble improving his win-loss record at the tournament to 21-3.

"Look, I am happy with my

form here and in this match," Federer said. "It wasn't a tough match and I was quite comfortable.

"I was in control of my shots and created many opportunities. This was easy compared to the first two matches."

Tsonga outlasted seventh-seeded Guillermo Garcia-Lopez of Spain 7-6 (4), 7-6 (9) to continue his successful comeback from a knee injury that brought his 2010 season to an early end.

Federer has won two of his three previous meetings with the Frenchman.

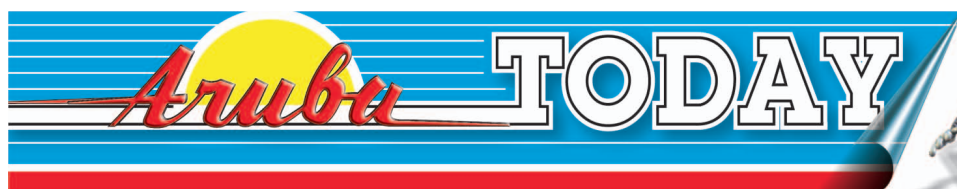
"He's a wonderful player,

a great character," Federer said of Tsonga. "He has performed well at the big tournaments, especially on the hard surface at the Australian Open.

"Unfortunately, he's had injuries and didn't play as much but he's tough."

Federer broke Troicki twice in each set while holding serve easily against a tired-looking Troicki who has won just one ATP title.

The No. 2-ranked Federer did not serve a single ace but did not have to save a break point as he kept up his record of not dropping a set in the tournament. □



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Braves lock up Uggla, ready to challenge Phillies



Atlanta Braves second baseman Dan Uggla smiles following a news conference announcing his signing of a five-year contract worth \$62 million with the baseball team, Thursday, Jan. 6, 2011, in Atlanta.

Associated Press

PAUL NEWBERRY

AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — The Atlanta Braves signed the team's richest contract in almost a decade on Thursday, handing Dan Uggla a \$62 million, five-year deal.

The contract was a signal of intent by the Braves to take on the Philadelphia Phillies in the fight for the National League East division title in 2011.

"This team is ready to win right now," Uggla said. "The core group is going to be here a long time. We have the pieces in place to win for a long time."

Atlanta addressed its major offseason need, adding a right-handed power hitter to a lineup that includes lefties Brian McCann, Jason Heyward and the new starting first baseman, rookie Freddie Freeman. Uggla, acquired from Florida in a November trade, has averaged 31 homers, 100 runs scored and 93 RBIs over his five-year career.

"If we were going to spring training today," general manager Frank Wren said, "we would feel very good about our team."

Uggla receives a \$1 million signing bonus, \$9 million this year and \$13 million in each of the following four seasons. His contract is Atlanta's largest total payout since Andruw Jones signed a six-

year, \$75 million deal after the 2001 season, signaling a commitment to keep up with a Phillies team that made the biggest splash of the winter by signing Cliff Lee to a \$120 million deal.

Philadelphia has assembled one of baseball's greatest starting rotations ever, adding Lee to the already imposing trio of Roy Halladay, Roy Oswalt and Cole Hamels.

The Braves don't sound intimidated, not with Uggla ready to hold down a spot in the middle of the batting order for years to come and a starting rotation that includes Tim Hudson, Derek Lowe, Tommy Hanson and Jair Jurrjens.

"The Phillies are going to be good. Very few people have (ever had) a pitching staff like

they have," Uggla conceded. "At the same time, we have guys who are going to give us a chance to win every day. Look at our pitchers. We're pretty good, too. And we've got some guys who can hit the ball."

In 2010, Atlanta was in first place much of the season but faded as injuries piled up. The Phillies rallied to win another division title by six games, with the Braves hanging on to claim the wild card for their first postseason appearance since 2005.

By signing the contract, Uggla had foregone the potential riches on offer with free agency beckoning at the end of the season.

"Maybe I could've gotten more money next year," Uggla said. "But the bottom line is:

Anti-BCS group files IRS complaint over cruise

By RALPH D. RUSSO

AP College Football Writer

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — A political action committee out to change college football's postseason system has filed a complaint with the IRS about a cruise hosted by Orange Bowl organizers for athletic directors and conference commissioners, along with their spouses.

The Playoff PAC reported the "Orange Bowl Summer Splash" to the IRS, complaining that the "all-inclusive, three-night, four-day complimentary getaway" to the Bahamas was a junket and could be impermissible under the bowl's tax-exempt status as a charity.

Orange Bowl executive director Eric Poms told The Associated Press that the bowl committee has consulted with its legal counsel believes it is "100 percent in compliance with IRS guidelines."

"The Summer Splash event was a business trip and a lot of business

was conducted during the time frame of the event," he said. "We had an opportunity for the Orange Bowl committee to advocate the great destination that south Florida is."

An IRS spokesman declined to comment.

Documents obtained by Playoff PAC through public records requests and released last week include a spot on the trip agenda for an off day anchored near a private island and another at Atlantis Paradise Island Resort. What the PAC calls "other Orange Bowl documents" include an announcement that "a limited number of appointments have been blocked at the spa for you or your spouse/guest for either a manicure or pedicure. The Orange Bowl will provide one service."

The trip was from last June 11-14.

"Not only is this cruise problematic under federal tax laws, schools are getting fleeced to pay for these frivolous perks," Playoff PAC co-

founder Matthew Sanderson said in a news release. "The Orange Bowl forces participating schools to pay above-market rates for game tickets." There were roughly 10,000 empty seats at Sun Life Stadium on Monday as Stanford beat Virginia Tech 40-12. Poms said the Playoff PAC's complaint is filled with "half-truths, inaccuracies and items that are taken out of context."

BCS executive director Bill Hancock, in Arizona for the BCS title game next week between Auburn and Oregon, said Thursday that all the bowls have procedures to ensure they are in compliance with the IRS. The BCS system has been under increasing pressure from critics who see it as an unfair system for crowning a national champion in college football, one that makes it tough for non-power conference teams to get in the title game while creating a financial windfall for bowl organizers. □

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JUST SAY NO TO DRUGS

Always connected lifestyle on display at CES

by Chris Lefkow

LAS VEGAS – Smarter devices, homes and cars for the always connected lifestyle are taking center stage as the annual Consumer Electronics Show kicks off here on Thursday.

Slick new smartphones, ultra-thin laptops, tablet computers to rival Apple's iPad and Web-connected and 3D television sets are expected to grab the most attention during the four-day event at the Las Vegas Convention Center.

But the show floor will also feature more smart home appliances such as ovens which can download recipes and vehicles which give drivers hands-free voice control access to their smartphone applications.

Technology titans such as Cisco, Intel, LG Electronics, Microsoft, Motorola, Panasonic, Samsung, Sony and Toshiba were among the firms offering a glimpse of their upcoming products to reporters here ahead of the official CES opening.

Motorola Mobility and LG

Electronics both announced plans to launch touchscreen tablet computers this year powered by "Honeycomb," the latest version of Google's Android software optimized for tablets.

Motorola Mobility said its tablet, the Xoom, which features a screen about the same size as the iPad, will be in stores by the end of March while LG Electronics said its G-Slate is expected to be available in the coming months.

More than 100 tablets are expected to be announced at CES as manufacturers around the world attempt to carve out a share of a market which technology research firm Gartner estimates will see sales of 55 million units in 2011.

As for market leader Apple, the California-based maker of the iPod, iPhone and iPad is once again shunning CES.

Motorola Mobility was also one of a number of companies showing off their latest smartphones including devices designed to work on

Verizon's 4G network, which boasts mobile Internet speeds up to 10 times faster than 3G. Internet-enabled televisions are also in abundance as manufacturers seek to merge the Web with the traditional television viewing experience. "The next big transformation is on us; the marriage between television sets and the Internet," Sony chief executive Sir Howard Stringer said. "It is clear that consumers are ready for it."

The Consumer Electronics Association (CEA), which brings together the 2,600 exhibitors expected at CES this year, has forecast that more than half of all TV sets sold in 2014 will be Internet enabled.

As for 3D TV, which has met with a fairly unenthusiastic response from consumers so far, Sony is among the companies rolling out new 3D models, betting that the future of home entertainment is in 3D.

David Steel, executive vice president for Samsung Electronics North America,



Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer delivers a keynote address on January 5 at the 2011 International Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, Nevada. The show gives center stage to smarter devices, homes and cars for the always connected lifestyle.

said more than one million 3D TV sets were sold in the United States last year with Samsung taking a 70 percent market share.

"We're making a big investment in 3D and we're very optimistic about its future," Steel said.

As for the home, CEA chief economist Shawn Dubravac said the average US household has 24 technology products -- and they are getting smarter

all the time, from ovens to dishwashers to refrigerators to floor-cleaning robots.

Sanjay Jha, the chief executive of Motorola Mobility, said the smartphone is emerging as the device at the "center of our digital lives" allowing people to "connect with home while on the road."

"Smart access will allow us to control and monitor home appliances with a smartphone," Jha said.



Verizon CEO Ivan Seidenberg leaves the stage after he delivered his keynote address on the opening day of the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas January 6, 2011.

Verizon reveals first '4G' wireless tablet, phone

By PETER SVENSSON,
AP Technology Writer

LAS VEGAS – The first gadgets with built-in access to Verizon Wireless' new, high-speed wireless data network are a smart phone and a tablet from Motorola Mobility Inc., both designed to take advantage of the network's speed for videoconferencing. More devices for Verizon's "4G" network, which went live for laptop modems in last month, are expected to be announced Thursday

by the CEO of Verizon Communications Inc. at the International Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.

The new wireless network is the fastest in the country, and Verizon is hoping to cash in on that advantage by selling tablets and smart phones that devour data. There are unconfirmed reports that Verizon will also get to sell a version of the iPhone, breaking AT&T Inc.'s exclusive hold, but analysts

don't expect Verizon to reveal one at the show.

Motorola's Xoom tablet will come with a 10.1-inch screen and two cameras, one for video chatting and one for high-definition videos. The Xoom will begin selling in the first quarter. Initially it will work with Verizon's 3G network and will be upgradeable so it can work on the speedier 4G network in the second quarter. The Droid Bionic smart phone will also have two cameras, to help with videoconferencing. It will be one of the first phones with a so-called "dual-core processor" that will roughly double its computing capacity, which should help with video processing. The phone's market debut hasn't been set. Verizon Wireless is a joint venture of Verizon Communications Inc. and Vodafone Group PLC of Britain. Motorola Mobility Inc. was formed this week as Motorola Inc. split into two parts. The Mobility consists of the cell phone business. □

Visa claims new software catches more fraud

By JORDAN ROBERTSON,
AP Technology Writer

SAN JOSE, Calif. – It's not just consumers who have to make hard choices when paying with plastic. Credit card companies choose to scrutinize some bits of information for signs of fraud while ignoring others. And those decisions are made in a fraction of a second when approving or denying a sale. Visa, which operates the world's biggest electronic payment network, is

speaking publicly Thursday for the first time about new technologies it put in place ahead of the 2010 holidays.

The company says the upgraded systems can catch more fraud because its developers figured out ways for the software to look for more signs of bad behavior at once. Some of the variables include the speed of transactions on a particular card, the time of day, the physical distance between transactions and the type of store.

Nancy Hilgers, Visa's head of global risk products, said that earlier versions weren't able to analyze as many data during a purchase. In some cases, the check was limited to just two of those elements at a time. In the interest of speed and because of limitations of the technology, Visa was letting some criminals slip through the cracks. The new software, which rolled out in September, can combine more than a dozen different variables. □

Medic: Doc grabbed painkillers in Jackson bedroom

By ANTHONY McCARTNEY,
AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES—A paramedic testified Thursday that he saw the doctor charged in the death of Michael Jackson grab three bottles of painkillers and place the vials in a bag during futile efforts to revive the pop star at his mansion.

Paramedic Martin Blount said he was surprised to see the bottles because defendant Dr. Conrad Murray had told paramedics he hadn't given Jackson any drugs.

"I saw three small bottles of lidocaine," Blount testified. "He scooped them off the floor and put them into a black bag."

Murray also produced a hypodermic needle at one point and wanted to use it on the singer, but Blount and other paramedics refused, according to the testimony. Blount described Murray as frantic and sweating profusely at the time.

The paramedic was the seventh witness called at a preliminary hearing after which a judge will decide if there is enough evidence for Murray to stand trial for involuntary manslaughter. Authorities contend Murray gave Jackson a lethal dose of the powerful anesthetic propofol and other sedatives in the bedroom of his rented mansion before he died on June 25, 2009.

Deputy District Attorney David Walgren said in his opening statement that Jackson was already dead when Murray summoned help and tried to conceal his administering of propofol to the pop star.

The Houston-based cardiologist has pleaded not guilty.

Blount said he thinks Jackson may have been dead for at least 20 minutes before he and other emergency personnel arrived.

Murray's defense attorney, Joseph Low IV, did not ask Blount about the bottles on cross-examination.

Blount said Murray told paramedics that Jackson had passed out about a minute before 911 was called. However, Blount's partner, paramedic Richard Senneff, previously testified that Jackson's hands and feet were turning blue by the time he arrived.

Senneff testified Wednesday that Murray never mentioned that he had given Jackson propofol, and that he saw no signs in the room of propofol or other sedatives that were later found in Jackson's body.

Deputy District Attorney David Walgren described Murray's actions as "an extreme deviation from the standard of care."

Murray could face four years in prison if tried and convicted of involuntary manslaughter. His attorneys say Murray did



LaToya Jackson arrives for the preliminary hearing for Michael Jackson's doctor Conrad Murray, charged in the death of the singer, at Los Angeles Superior Court Thursday, Jan 6, 2011.

(AP Photo/Nick Ut)

not give Jackson anything that should have killed him.

Senneff's testimony came after one of Jackson's former bodyguards, Alberto Alvarez, testified that Murray told him to place medicine vials and an IV bag in other bags before calling 911. Alvarez was the

only other person in the room with Murray while initial efforts were being made to revive Jackson.

"I said, 'Dr. Murray, what happened?' And he said, 'He had a reaction. He had a bad reaction,'" Alvarez testified. □



FILE - In this Dec. 11, 2009 photo, Anna Nicole Smith's lawyer and ex-boyfriend, Howard K. Stern leaves Los Angeles Superior Court after a hearing of the conspiracy trial of Stern, Sandeep Kapoor and Dr. Khristine Eroshevich. Prosecutors in the Anna Nicole Smith prescription drug case are urging a judge to choose felony probation, community service and fines rather than prison for Dr. Khristine Eroshevich and Howard K. Stern, her psychiatrist and lawyer-boyfriend convicted of obtaining drugs for her under false names. They are scheduled for sentencing Thursday, Jan. 6, 2011, in Los Angeles.

(AP Photo/Nick Ut, File)

By LINDA DEUTSCH,
AP Special Correspondent

LOS ANGELES — A judge Thursday dismissed the drug conspiracy convictions of the late Anna Nicole Smith's boyfriend-lawyer Howard K. Stern and her psychiatrist, allowing only one conviction

to remain against the physician while reducing it to a misdemeanor.

Superior Court Judge Robert Perry found that Stern never had the intent to defraud when he used his name and others to protect Smith's privacy when he obtained prescriptions for

Judge dismisses conviction of Howard K. Stern

her.

Perry also found that psychiatrist Khristine Eroshevich was acting out of concern for Smith and cited her long career and service to the community in deciding to sentence her to no more than one year of probation and a \$100 fine for obtaining one Vicodin prescription under a false name.

The ruling marked the denouement of a long-running drama centering on the blonde beauty's troubled life, which was documented on reality TV, in tabloids and in trial testimony. Smith also made headlines in a continuing \$300 million court fight with the estate of her oil tycoon husband.

Both Stern and Eroshevich said later they were pleased and believed Smith would be happy with the outcome.

"This case never should have been brought," Stern said outside court.

"It has been four years of my life," he added, referring to the span since Smith's death. Stern said he had not had time to grieve in the interim and now hopes to examine his options and move on with his

life.

"I'm very happy," said Eroshevich. "I can live with the misdemeanor."

She added, "I don't want to be a martyr. Everyone makes mistakes."

Perry had said in September that he saw weaknesses in the prosecution case but felt he had to let the jury decide most of the charges. He said that in the past he had changed verdicts when he did not agree with them.

At that time, he dismissed two charges against Stern.

"I don't think there's evidence that a layperson knows it's illegal to write a prescription in another name for a celebrity," the judge said then, noting that Stern is not a doctor.

Jurors handed a total acquittal for Dr. Sandeep Kapoor, Smith's primary physician. But they convicted Stern and Eroshevich of conspiring to violate the false name statute to obtain pain killers for the former Playboy model. Eroshevich also was convicted of obtaining Vicodin by fraud. Kapoor came to court Thursday for the sentencing of his former co-defendants.

"I'm here to support them.

This was four years of my life and today is finally closure," he said.

The case was launched last year amid much fanfare by then-California Attorney General and now-Gov. Jerry Brown who denounced the defendants as conspirators in over-prescribing prescription drugs to Smith, whom he called "a known addict." He accused the defendants of being lured by Hollywood glamor. After a three-week preliminary hearing and a nine-week trial, jurors essentially rejected those claims and convicted on few of the 11 charges. Witnesses said Smith was not an addict but a woman struggling with chronic pain.

This week, prosecutors advocated sentencing both defendants to five years of supervised probation, 300 hours each of community service, with Stern working for Caltrans, California's highway maintenance department. They suggested Eroshevich's community service be directed by the California Medical Board and that each defendant pay a \$5,000 fine. □

BUSINESS

Aruba TODAY

Stocks are mostly lower on weak jobs report

By CHIP CUTTER,
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK – Stocks slipped Thursday after the government reported an increase in the number of applications for unemployment benefits last week.

The Labor Department said 409,000 people applied for unemployment benefits. That's up from 388,000 the previous week, when applications fell to their lowest level in more than two years. The number of applications suggests that companies are adding jobs but at a sluggish pace.

The report came a day after ADP, a payroll processor, estimated that private companies added 297,000 jobs last month, far more than the 100,000 economists expected.

That report pushed stock prices higher and Treasury prices lower as investors became more optimistic about the job market.

In a week with several reports on employment, the most important one will arrive on Friday when the Labor Department releases its monthly survey of all U.S. payrolls and the unemployment rate. Economists expect the rate will fall to 9.7 percent from 9.8 percent.

Retailers reported sales figures for December, and many were weaker than analysts had expected. Target Corp. fell 6 percent to \$55.31 and Gap Inc. fell 7 percent to \$20.59. Macy's Inc. fell 3 percent to \$24.33.

A blizzard in the Northeast hurt sales after Christmas. Retail sales were strong in November since many customers shopped earlier in the holiday season this year. Analysts still expect overall retail spending in November and December to increase by the largest amount since 2006. The Dow Jones industrial average lost 31 points, or 0.3 percent, to 11,692 in afternoon trading. The Standard & Poor's 500 index fell 3, or 0.3 percent, to 1,273. The Nasdaq composite index rose 3, or 0.1 percent, to 2,706.

Bond prices rose, sending their yields slightly lower. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note fell to 3.43 percent from 3.46 percent late Wednesday. The yield is used to set interest



Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange early in the trading session in New York, January 3, 2011.

rates on many kinds of loans including mortgages.

Monsanto Co. rose 3 percent to \$71.16 after the company reported that higher sales of corn, soybean, vegetable and cotton seeds helped it become

profitable again.

Constellation Brands Inc. fell 5 percent to \$20.51 after the maker of Robert Mondavi wine and Svedka vodka said revenue fell 2 percent on weak wine sales. □

Hiring outlook brightens as layoffs decline

By CHRISTOPHER S. RUGABER,
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON – The number of people applying for unemployment benefits over the past month has reached its lowest point since July 2008, raising hopes that hiring is about to accelerate.

The drop in applications is the latest sign that the economy is improving, and economists expect Friday's employment report for December to show a solid gain in jobs.

"The economy is gaining momentum, and the job market, which has been the recovery's caboose, is starting to catch up," said Zach Pandl, an economist at Nomura Securities.

Applications for unemployment benefits actually rose last week to a seasonally adjusted 409,000, the Labor Department said Thursday. Still, that's not much higher than the 391,000 level reached in the previous week — the lowest in more than two years — and week to week figures tend to fluctuate more during the holidays.

A more reliable measure is the four-week average for applications. That fell last week to 410,750, the lowest level in nearly two and a half years and the eighth decline in nine weeks.

Fewer than 425,000 people applying for benefits signals modest job growth. And applications are far below their peak during the recession of 651,000, reached in March 2009. Still, economists say applications need to fall consistently to

375,000 or below to substantially bring down the unemployment rate.

The declines won't matter much to most Americans until they are accompanied by significant job gains and a drop in the 9.8 percent unemployment rate.

Economists expect the government to report Friday that employers added a net total of 145,000 jobs and the unemployment rate fell to 9.7 percent last month. Some are raising their forecasts after payroll services provider ADP said Wednesday that private employers added a net total of 297,000 new jobs last month. That's the most in the ten years that ADP has tracked the data.

The ADP's figures have usually differed from the government's — sometimes by a wide margin — and many economists cautioned against reading too much into the numbers. But some say it's a sign that Friday's government report will show major gains.

Nigel Gault, chief U.S. economist at IHS Global Insight, said Wednesday he now expects December's job gains to be 190,000, up from a previous forecast of 150,000.

Separately, the International Council of Shopping Centers reported that consumers increased their spending in November and December 3.8 percent, the largest increase in holiday spending since 2006. But most of the gain was in November.

Spending slowed in December.

The weekly unemployment benefits figures provide a real-time snapshot of the job market. Applications reflect the level of layoffs, but can also indicate whether companies are willing to hire.

The unemployment applications figures can be less reliable around the winter holidays because there are large numbers of seasonal layoffs by retailers, construction companies and other employers. Bad weather can also make it harder for laid-off workers to apply for benefits.

The number of people continuing to receive unemployment benefits fell by 47,000 to 4.1 million in the week ending Dec. 25, the department said.

That doesn't include millions of long-term unemployed who are receiving extended benefits from the federal government under an emergency program set up during the recession.

Another 4.5 million people received benefits under the extended program, which offers up to 99 weeks of aid in states with high unemployment. All told, about 8.8 million people were on the benefit rolls in the week ending Dec. 18, the most recent data available.

That's down from about 8.9 million in the previous week. Economists say that many recipients likely used up all their benefits, while some may have gotten jobs. □



Journal: Study linking vaccine to autism was fraud



British doctor Andrew Wakefield arrives for a hearing at Britain's General Medical Council (GMC) in 2010. A 1998 study that linked childhood autism to a vaccine has been branded an "elaborate fraud" by the British Medical Journal (BMJ). Wakefield -- the lead author in the 1998 study -- says he is the victim of a smear campaign by drug manufacturers.

LONDON – The first study to link a childhood vaccine to autism was based on doctored information about the children involved, according to a new report on the widely discredited research.

The conclusions of the 1998 paper by Andrew Wakefield and colleagues was renounced by 10 of its 13 authors and later retracted by the medical journal *Lancet*, where it was published.

Still, the suggestion the MMR shot was connected to autism spooked parents worldwide and immunization rates for measles, mumps and rubella have never fully recovered.

A new examination found, by comparing the reported diagnoses in the paper to hospital records, that Wakefield and colleagues

altered facts about patients in their study.

The analysis, by British journalist Brian Deer, found that despite the claim in Wakefield's paper that the 12 children studied were normal until they had the MMR shot, five had previously documented developmental problems. Deer also found that all the cases were somehow misrepresented when he compared data from medical records and the children's parents.

Wakefield could not be reached for comment despite repeated calls and requests to the publisher of his recent book, which claims there is a connection between vaccines and autism that has been ignored by the medical establishment. Wakefield

now lives in the U.S. where he enjoys a vocal following including celebrity supporters like Jenny McCarthy.

Deer's article was paid for by the *Sunday Times* of London and Britain's Channel 4 television network. It was published online Thursday in the medical journal, *BMJ*.

In an accompanying editorial,

BMJ editor Fiona Godlee and colleagues called Wakefield's study "an elaborate fraud." They said Wakefield's work in other journals should be examined to see if it should be retracted.

Last May, Wakefield was stripped of his right to practice medicine in Britain. Many other published studies have

shown no connection between the MMR vaccination and autism.

But measles has surged since Wakefield's paper was published and there are sporadic outbreaks in Europe and the U.S. In 2008, measles was deemed endemic in England and Wales. □

Drugs may level fertility playing field for obese

By Leigh Krietsch Boerner

NEW YORK – Heavy women often have a harder time getting pregnant than their slimmer peers, but new findings suggest weight may cease to matter when women take fertility drugs.

In a report in the journal *Fertility and Sterility*, scientists say that the "weight effect" is overcome by a higher dose of ovulation-stimulating drugs, which ensures obese women have a similar concentration of the hormones as those with a lower body mass index (BMI), a ratio of weight to height.

The report shows 25 percent of normal, 37 percent of overweight, and 36 percent of obese women who sought out treatments conceived with them.

These fertility rates are about equal, even though they look slightly inflated in larger women, said Dr. Irene Souter, lead author on the study. This

is because the study included fewer heavy women, so just one more pregnancy means a big difference.

With the higher drug dose, "you bring the chances of conceiving close to that of a normal woman, and you've got a good chance of a live birth," she said. "I wouldn't say that obese women do better, I would say that they have a comparable outcome." A problem with requiring a bigger dose of fertility drug is that the costs go up, Souter said, with an obese woman paying, on average, roughly \$200 more than the lower BMI categories. The total cost of this treatment, which is a combination of fertility drugs and artificial insemination, can range from several hundred dollars to around \$1200.

There are also slight risks associated with the ovulation-stimulating injections, including enlarged ovaries, multiple births and pregnancy complications, according to the American Society for Reproductive Medicine.

Age is the biggest determinant of how easily a woman can get pregnant. Without fertility treatments, a woman in her 20s trying to get pregnant has about a 50 percent chance of succeeding per menstrual cycle. That number declines with age and drops significantly after 35.

The study looked at 477 women who had not had previous infertility treatments, and who started the treatments at the same time in their menstrual cycle. Underweight and extremely obese women were excluded, because these groups tend to have abnormal ovulation.

But the researchers did not compare their findings to similar women not on fertility drugs, said Dr. Calvin Greene, a fertility expert at the University of Calgary. For the study to be truly useful he said, these data are needed.

Doctors don't know why heavier women have more trouble conceiving. But they do know that they tend to have increased problems in pregnancy, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, low birth weight, and delivering premature babies.

"The point is that it's harder to achieve pregnancy, and you get higher risk pregnancies when you do achieve them," Greene said.

Unfortunately, he said, more useful studies, such as seeing if losing weight will give obese women a better chance of getting pregnant, don't exist. Still, both Souter and Greene say that it's better to have a normal BMI before trying to have a baby.

"We just need to get a little lighter and a little healthier," Greene said. □

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(AP Photo/Science)

"It's hard to get men to volunteer to cry" in a lab, noted Weizmann neurobiologist Noam Sobel, senior author of the study appearing in Friday's edition of the journal *Science*. Emotional tears are chemically

Stay tuned: He's now testing male tears, "as we finally have one good man crier." □

So the research team turned to a new technology, synchrotron X-ray microtomography. The technology is much like a very detailed CT scan. X-rays create virtual slices of the specimen, which are then stitched together into a three-dimensional image by computer software. “You rely on all of this sophisticated software that puts all of these slices together and, my god, you’re just astonished at what you see,” Landman said. □

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Brasil aplica encaje para frenar alza del real

BRASILIA (Reuters) - Brasil tomó otra medida audaz para contener su moneda el jueves al hacer más caro para los bancos apostar por el fortalecimiento del real.

Las medidas, anunciadas sólo días después de la asunción del mandato de la presidenta Dilma Rousseff, parecían anticipar una postura más dura contra los problemas cambiarios del país.

Rousseff asumió su mandato prometiendo tomar acción para contener un aumento del real, que afecta a los exportadores y amenaza con minar la competitividad de la mayor economía de Latinoamérica.

El Banco Central instauró un requerimiento de reservas sobre las posiciones de bancos en corto en dólares, una apuesta de que el real se fortalecerá contra la divisa estadounidense, con la esperanza de reducir el comercio especulativo en el mercado de tipo de cambio extranjero, que ha empujado al real a su máximo nivel en dos años.

El real cerró con una desvalorización del 0,78

por ciento, cotizando a 1,686/1,688 unidades por dólar en el mercado interbancario. La moneda se ha apreciado cerca de un 13 por ciento desde mayo, lo que ha llevado a Goldman Sachs a calificarla como la divisa más sobrevalorada del mundo.

Brasil lidia con una avalancha de capital extranjero que aprovecha las tasas de interés ultra bajas en el mundo desarrollado para buscar mayores retornos en economías emergentes.

Los bancos brasileños tendrán tres meses para cumplir con las nuevas reglas, de modo que lo más probable es que no se sienta un impacto inmediato en el mercado cambiario.

“No cambia significativamente la tendencia”, dijo Flavio Serrano, economista de Brasil en el Espirito Santo Investment Bank, en Sao Paulo. “El dólar estadounidense está perdiendo valor frente a grandes monedas debido a que la Reserva Federal de Estados Unidos está llenando al mercado con dinero. Las medidas del



Foto de archivo de unos billetes de 50 y 100 reales tras su salida al mercado en Brasilia, dic 13 2010. REUTERS/Ricardo Moraes

Banco Central no van a cambiar lo que está haciendo la Fed”, agregó. A partir del 4 de abril, los bancos tendrán que asegurarse que sus posiciones totales en corto en divisas estén por debajo de los 3.000 millones de dólares o del valor de su propio capital de referencia. El Banco Central instauró un requerimiento de reservas equivalente al 60 por ciento de cualquier nueva apuesta contra el dólar. Las posiciones en corto en dólares de los

bancos subieron en los últimos meses a 16.800 millones de dólares hacia el fin de diciembre, el mayor volumen desde que el Gobierno comenzó a registrar el dato en 1994. La autoridad monetaria espera que las posiciones en corto en dólares caigan a cerca de 10.000 millones de dólares en abril. “No creemos que sea bueno cuando hay cambios tan significativos (en posiciones en moneda extranjera) en una u otra dirección”, dijo Aldo Mendes, director

de política monetaria del Banco Central.

“Es malo, porque si hay un repentino aumento de volatilidad en el mercado cambiario extranjero, los bancos tendrán que apresurarse para cubrir esas posiciones rápidamente, y eso genera incluso más volatilidad no deseada”, añadió Mendes. El Fondo Monetario Internacional (FMI) calificó las medidas como un paso apropiado en la batalla de Brasil por fortalecer su sistema bancario ante enormes entradas de capital. □

Perú:

Hija de Fujimori inscribe su candidatura presidencial

LIMA (AP) - Keiko Fujimori, hija del ex mandatario Alberto Fujimori, inscribió el jueves su candidatura a la presidencia para las elecciones de abril.

En un bullicioso desfile que congregó a numerosos partidarios y simpatizantes, Keiko Fujimori llegó a la sede del Jurado Especial Electoral acompañada de sus candidatos a la primera y segunda vicepresidencia, Rafael Rey y Jaime Yoshiyama, respectivamente.

“Vamos a trabajar por todos los peruanos, pero sobre todo por los que menos tienen”, dijo la candidata y congresista de 35 años.

“A partir de hoy empieza el tramo final... Queremos hacer una campaña sin escándalos”, añadió en alusión a las últimas denuncias que comprometieron al Partido Solidaridad Nacional del ex alcalde de Lima

Luis Castañeda, uno de los favoritos en las encuestas.

Según un reciente sondeo de intención de voto a nivel nacional, realizado por la consultora Apoyo, Keiko Fujimori se encuentra en segundo lugar de las preferencias electorales con 20%, por detrás de Castañeda y del ex presidente Alejandro Toledo, quienes comparten el primer lugar con 23%.

No obstante, sus rivales políticos la cuestionan afirmando que su única motivación es llegar a la presidencia para liberar a su padre, preso desde 2007.

Fujimori, quien gobernó entre 1990 y 2000, fue condenado en abril de 2009 a 25 años de cárcel por dos matanzas cometidas por militares durante su gobierno. □

Senadores McCain y Barrasso viajan a América Latina

WASHINGTON (AP) - Los senadores republicanos John McCain y John Barrasso viajarán a Colombia, Brasil, Chile, Panamá y México del 7 al 14 de enero para evaluar la seguridad regional y el comercio, anunciaron el jueves los legisladores.

Los legisladores se reunirán con jefes de estado, congresistas, ministros, militares y miembros de la sociedad civil en cada país, informó un comunicado de prensa.

En Colombia, Brasil y México se informarán sobre el combate que esos gobiernos libran contra bandas criminales y narcotraficantes, y subrayarán la necesidad de que el Congreso estadounidense ratifique los tratados de libre comercio pendientes con Colombia y Panamá. □



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